



ROBERTUS MOSS S.T.P.
DECANUS ELIENS:

G. Vertue Sculp.



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S E R M O N S
A N D
D I S C O U R S E S
O N
P R A C T I C A L S U B J E C T S :
Never before Printed.

By *R O B E R T M O S S*, D. D.
Late Dean of *Ely*, and Preacher to the Ho-
nourable SOCIETY of *Grays-Inn*.

Publish'd from the Originals at the Request
of the said SOCIETY.

WITH A
P R E F A C E, giving some Account of the
Author, by a LEARNED HAND.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *W. B.* for RICHARD WILLIAMSON
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To the WORSHIPFUL
The MASTERS of the BENCH
OF THE
HONOURABLE SOCIETY
OF
G R A Y's - I N N,
THESE
DISCOURSES

Preached before Them,
And at Their Request Published,
ARE
HUMBLY INSCRIBED

BY
Their most obliged Servant,

MARY MOSS.

To the Worshipful

The Masters of the Bench

OF THE

HONOURABLE SOCIETY

OF



G R A

DISCOURSES

Preached before

And at their Request Published

ARE

HUMBLY INSCRIBED

BY

Thos. most obliged Servant

John Mordaunt



THE
PREFACE:

Containing some Account of the

AUTHOR.



THE Author of these Sermons had so established a Reputation as a Preacher, and his Abilities were so generally confessed, that they cannot fail of making their Way into the World, with sufficient Advantage, without any other Testimony, than an

A 3 Assurance

The P R E F A C E.

Affurance of their being genuine:
Nor could they receive any additional Recommendation from the Subscription of a Name much inferior to his own.

MANY Books have been published with commendatory Introductions by Persons of known Character and Credit, whose Judgment was highly valued; who, by setting in an advantageous Light the concealed Merits of the Authors, have caused their Works to meet with a more early and diffusive Reception, than a naked Edition, without any prefatory Account, might probably have been attended with.

BUT this is far from being the
present



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present Case; where the Author's Name is too great to need any such borrow'd Helps, and the Recommender's too little to add any Weight to the Scale, if it really did: Who cannot persuade himself but that it would be assuming a sort of Superiority with Respect to the Author, and an arrogant kind of dictating to the Readers, as if he meant to challenge their Approbation of a Book, because he approves of it, rather than for any Regard to its intrinsic Merit.

HOWEVER, as several worthy Gentlemen of that learned Society, before which our Author's Discourses were deliver'd, did earnestly desire, that so many as should be thought proper, of those Ser-

mons which they had heard with Satisfaction and Advantage, might be made publick, and also that something might be prefix'd, in the Way of Recommendation; in Deference to their Desire this short Character was undertaken, but, for the Reasons above-mention'd, under the exprefs Condition of its appearing without a Name.

DR. ^a *Moss* laid the first Foundation of his Learning at *Norwich* ^b School. The Place of his ^c Nativity was *Gillingham* in *Norfolk*, his

^a Some lesser Circumstances, which, though one Sort of Readers are apt to disregard, yet the more inquisitive are curious to be informed of, for the Sake of both, it is thought adviseable to throw into the Margin; that neither the Attention of the one Sort may be interrupted, nor the Curiosity of the other be defeated.

^b His Master was Mr. *John Burton*.

^c He was born about 1667.

Father

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^d Father who lived at *Poswick* in the same County was a Gentleman in good Circumstances, occupying his own Lands; so that by his Care and prudent Management he was enabled to make an handsome Provision for all his four Sons, of whom our Author was the ^e eldest.

HE was ^f admitted of *Bennet* or *Corpus Christi* College in *Cam-*

^d His Father's Name was *Robert*, his Mother's *Mary*.

^e The three youngest Sons were *Samuel*, *William*, and *Charles*.

^f *April 1682*, under the Tuition of Mr. *John Corey*, B. D. took his Bachelour's Degree 1685-6. He was ordained Deacon by *John [Lake]* Bishop of *Chichester*, in the Parish Church of *St. Dionis Back-Church London*, *December 26, 1688*. Ordained Priest by *Thomas [Tenison]* Bishop of *Lincoln*, at *Bugden*, *September 21, 1690*.

Licensed by the University to be one of their twelve Preachers *July 6, 1693*.

bridge,

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bridge, before he was sixteen Years of Age, where he was chosen Fellow, when of no higher standing than junior Bachelour, the very learned Dr. *Spencer*, Dean of *Ely*, the then Master, having a true Value for his Merit. He continued to distinguish himself, by repeated Proofs of very uncommon Abilities, and acquir'd the Reputation of one of the most ingenious Performers, of any about his Time, of all kinds of publick Exercises, whether in the Way of Classsical or Academical Learning. His Sermons at St. *Mary's* were always attended by a full Audience; and so were his Disputations in the Schools, in which he shew'd a clear and distinguishing Head, reason'd justly and closely, in defending a Question,

tion, and urged his Objections with great Acuteness, when he bore the Part of an Opponent, always expressing himself with great Ease and Fluency, in the most proper and significant *Latin*.

AFTER he had kept a Divinity Act in the Schools, in order to his Degree of ^s Bachelour in Divinity, there being a publick Commencement that Year, he voluntarily undertook another on that Occasion, in St. *Mary's*, where the Commencement was held, before the Erection of the new Regent-house: And acquitted himself in both, to the general Satisfaction, particu-

^s *Anno* 1696, seven Years after his commencing M. A. which was in 1689.

larly in maintaining the ^a Necessity of believing our Saviour to be the true God, against the Doctrine of *Episcopius*.

HE continued in his Fellowship for several Years, had the Tuition of a good Number of Pupils, who profited happily under his Instruction: And neither the good Wishes nor Endeavours of many were wanting for his Advancement to higher Stations in the University. That those Endeavours missed of Success, may easily be imputed to the Variety of Persons well qua-

^a The Question was thus stated :

Iesum Christum esse verum Deum est Doctrina creditu ad Salutem necessaria.

His other Position was,

Transubstantiatio non est æque credibilis, ac Trinitas Personarum in Divinâ Essentiâ.

lified

lified for the same Posts; in which Case, as all cannot gain their End, where there is Room only for one, so a Disappointment, under such Circumstances, can never be reckoned a Disparagement. He came within two or three Votes of being chosen publick Orator; for the Discharge of which Office, with Honour to the University and himself, if the Election had ended in his Favour, he was confessedly furnish'd with every proper Talent and Accomplishment, whether natural or acquir'd. And it will readily be allow'd, by all who remember the Transactions of those Times, that he lost no Credit, by that, or any other Competition.

HIS first Call from the University

fity was, his being ⁱ appointed Preacher to the Honourable Society of *Grays-Inn*, in the Room of the Rev. Dr. *Thomas Richardson*, Master of *St. Peter's College* in *Cambridge*; which Preferment he enjoyed to his dying Day, though for some of his last Years, when his Infirmities disabled him from officiating in Person, that learned Body, which always shew'd a great Regard to his Person, and still express it to his Memory, indulged him in the Liberty of supplying the Duty by a Deputy.

* TOWARD the End of the following Year, he was named Preacher

ⁱ By an Order of the Bench, July 11, 1698.

* Jan. 9, 1699.

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Assistant of St. James's Westminster, by his present Grace of Canterbury, then Rector, with the Concurrence of the Vestry. He was sworn Chaplain in Ordinary in ¹ three succeeding Reigns, and being one of the Chaplains in Waiting, ^m when the late Queen was pleased to visit the University of Cambridge, was created Doctor of Divinity, in her Majesty's Presence.

IN the Year ⁿ 1708, he was invited by the Parishioners of St. Law-

¹ To King William, April 30, 1701. to Queen Anne, July 9, 1702. to King George the First, October 28, 1715.

^m April 16, 1705.

ⁿ His License to that Lecture from Bishop Compton, bears Date, October 4, 1708.

rence

rence Jewry to accept of their Tuesday-Lecture, in the Room of the Rev. Dr. *Stanhope*, the late Dean of *Canterbury*, who then resign'd it: Which, though but moderately endow'd, as to Profit, had long been reputed a Post of Honour, having been possessed by a Succession of the most able and celebrated Preachers, of whom Archbishop *Tillotson* was one, and having been usually attended by a Resort of Persons of Note and Eminence in the City and elsewhere, and particularly by great Numbers of the Clergy, not only of the younger Sort, but by several of long Standing, and establish'd Characters. And our Author continued to support the Credit and Dignity of that Place, by meeting
with

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with the same Approbation and Applause, with which it had been maintained before, and which he himself had gained, in his former Stations: 'Till at last, after many Years painful Discharge of that Duty, he was by Infirmities growing upon him, obliged to surrender it, in the Year 1727.

UPON the Death of the Rev. Dr. *Charles Roderick*, he was named by Queen *Anne* to the Deanary of *Ely*, to which he was instituted by Bishop *Moore* April 30, 1712. This was the highest, but not the last Promotion, he obtained in the Church, for in the Year 1714, he was collated by Bishop *Robinson*, of *London*, to a small Rectory, on

• *Gilston* aliàs *Geddleston*.

a

the

the Eastern Side of *Hertfordshire*, which, though but of indifferent Value, proved of great Convenience to one so disabled, as he was, from taking long Journies upon the Stretch, and not only served to accommodate him in his Passage between *London* and *Ely*, but as he usually resided there several Months in the Year, it afforded him a more uninterrupted Retirement, than it was in his Power to command, in Places of publick Resort.

HIS Constitution had been impaired by many and severe Returns of the Gout, which Distemper began to seize him very early in Life; but his Attempt to cure it, by a Regimen, in which Sulphur was a great Ingredient, which others had
tried

tried before, with a Success, that was much boasted of, and which seemed, for some Time to have wrought a perfect Cure upon him; is thought to have occasioned that almost total Loss of the Use of his Limbs, which it was his Misfortune to labour under, for some of his latest Years. And as it began to be apprehended, that the same Indisposition might, in a little Time more, impair his Parts and Memory too, and leave little more than the outward Shell of what had been once Dr. *Moss*; (which Calamity had befallen some great Genius's and bright Ornaments of the Church) the Loss of him, though at any Time to be lamented, admitted of some Consolation, in

this Respect, that he did not outlive himself.

It pleased God to release him from this mortal State, *March* 26, 1729. in the sixty third Year of his Age^p. He died without Issue, and left a comfortable Provision for his Relict, and after several Legacies, the Bulk of his Fortune to his third

^p By his Will bearing Date *October* 20, 1728. he order'd that his Body should be buried with a decent Frugality, without the Ostentation, or Expence of any Escutcheon, or such like Ornament, only with a plain Tombstone laid over his Corps, and with these Letters inscribed: *R. M. S. T. P. D. E. Obiit Die & Anno*, with the Day, Month, and Year of his Death to be inserted.

He was buried in the Presbytery of the Cathedral Church of *Ely*, where the Bishops, Deans, and Prebendaries are usually interred.

Brother's

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Brother's ^a Son, a promising Youth,
a Student at *Cambridge*.

As to the Character of the Dean, he was of a graceful Personage, a Gentleman-like Address, a sweet, affable, and benevolent Disposition, without the least Tincture of the sour and austere, of the captious and censorious, of the assuming and over-bearing; and had something so winning and engaging in his Conversation, that he was scarce ever known to lose a Friend that had been once intimately acquainted with him. He was of a frank, open, and generous Mind, a Stran-

^a Mr. *Charles Moss*, then the Master's Sizar, of *Gonville and Caius College*; on the future Possessors of which Place, the Dean has settled an Augmentation of five Pounds *per Annum* for ever, charg'd on Lands in *Cheshire*.

ger to all Artifice and Disguise: However deep his Capacity reach'd in Matters of Science, yet in the Commerce of social Life, he was so void of all Reserve, that you might see through him: He affirmed, and you believed him; he promised, and you trusted him; you knew him, and you lov'd him.

HE was very communicative both of his Substance and his Knowledge, being a liberal Benefactor to Persons in Distress, and a friendly Guide to those who repaired to him for Advice; having been the Director of many young Divines, in the Course of their Studies, and having resolved some Cases of Conscience, of a nice and delicate Nature, which were put to him, with

with great Judgment and Integrity.

To give any Thing like an Abstract of the following Discourses, was not the Design of this Undertaking, and to point out the peculiar Excellencies in them, would be too much anticipating the Reader's Judgment; besides that a Comparison between' them, in singling out any one, as particularly excellent, might be looked upon as charging the rest with Imperfection. The Reader may be assured, that he will meet with what is useful and instructing in them all, and that they have their separate Beauties, and come all from the same masterly Hand: He will find Matters of Practice pressed upon him, by the most strong and

lively Motives, and Points of Doctrine established, against the Opposers of the Christian Faith, by rational and convincing Arguments; he will be instructed what to believe, how to act, and how to pray; and set right in the Way that leads to Happiness and Salvation.

ONE Set of Sermons however, in the ^r Second Volume, about *the Nature of Truth and Falshood*, as the Writer of this Account has been particularly affected with, he cannot forbear recommending to the Perusal of those, who were most familiarly acquainted with the Dean, not altogether for the Justness of the Composition, Clearness of Thought, or Elegance of Style,

^r Sermon IX, X, XI.

with Regard to which, other Sermons in these Volumes, may stand upon an equal Foot; but because it cannot help bringing to their Remembrance the Behaviour, and Manner of Dealing of their late worthy Friend; how truly he was an Observer of the Rules of that honest Casuistry, by which he requires others to regulate their Conduct; how sincere and hearty a Lover he was of Truth, how averse to Lying and Falshood, in every Shape; how far he was from allowing himself to practise any little Arts of Deceit, with what a generous Scorn he would forego the fairest Opportunities of promoting his own Advantage, if the Way to it were not open and direct, if any sinister Means were to be

be made Use of, if the lowest Degree of Dissimulation or Guile, of Shift or Evasion, of over-reaching or undermining, were to be dispensed with, in order to the Attainment of his End.

IN a Word, Faithfulness and Veracity, Honour and Integrity, Candour and Humanity, were his just Characteristicks, which joined to his other Christian Virtues and intellectual Endowments, render'd him amiable and respected, by as many as were within the Sphere of his Acquaintance: And those who were not, will be enclined, if not for the Sake of what is here said, to esteem him at least for his Work's Sake, after a Perusal of the following Sheets.



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thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.
And if thy right Hand offend thee, cut it
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table for thee, that one of thy Members
should*

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that School.



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ERRATA.

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SERMON I.

*Nathan's Parable of the Ew-Lamb
consider'd.*

2 SAM. xii. 7.

*And Nathan said to David, Thou
art the Man.*



THESE Words are the Home-SERM.

Application of a well-devised
Parable, to a Person, who at
first Proposal thought himself

but little concerned in it. But, impartial
Reason being once made the Judge, crimi-
nal Passion soon stood convict, especially

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when

Nathan's *Parable of*

SER M. when one foul, though *feigned*, Piece of
 I. Injustice, was brought as Evidence to confront another, that was *real*, beyond the Possibility of a Denial, and great and grievous beyond all Comparifon.

BUT the Fact itself is fo remarkable; the Parable fo appofite; and both fo full of useful Inſtruction, Admonition and Caution, that it may be fit to leave a ſhort View of the Caſe with you, before I proceed to any farther Obſervations upon it.

THE Caſe then was this.

KING *David*, from the Roof of his Houſe, had chanced to eſpy *Bathſheba* the beautiful Wife of *Uriah*, as ſhe was waſhing herſelf one Evening: And inſtantly upon the Sight of her, he grew enſlam'd with unlawful Love; and without once conſidering how great the Wickedneſs would be in the Sight of God, how irreparable the Injury to his loyal Subject her Huſband, he ſtrait diſpatched truſty Meſſengers (ſeldom wanted for ſuch vile Purpoſes) to win her to his Pleaſure; ſhe, a frail Woman, ſoon yielded to the powerful Temptation; and the Fruit next appear'd

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

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peared to their Shame, for e'er long she S E R M.
prov'd with Child by him. I.

AND now the Crime of a defiled Bed was like to be too flagrant to be much longer conceal'd, unless the Husband could be call'd in in good Time to cover it. But he either in his Simplicity not suspecting, or in his Cunning dissembling the Injury that had been done him, unluckily disappointed the Design; *David* out of a false Tenderneſs, was willing to diſpenſe with the Attendance of his faithful Servant, and ſend him to reſoſe himſelf at his own Houſe after his Journey. But *Uriah ſaid* 2 Sam. xi. 11.
unto David, the Ark, and Iſrael, and Judah abide in Tents, and my Lord Joab and the Servants of my Lord are encamped in the open Fields: Shall I then go into mine Houſe, to eat and to drink and to lie with my Wife? As thou liveſt, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not do this Thing.

THUS was this firſt Plot defeated, but moſt unluckily for *Uriah*: For it was ſoon ſucceeded by another and a much more fatal Stratagem. This loyal Heart, not capable, as it ſhould ſeem, ſo much as of thinking Evil of his Prince, was preſently

B 2

ſent

S E R M. sent back to the Army, with a Sentence of

I. Death against himself. The Instructions he carried to the General were, that the innocent *Uriah should be set in the Forefront of the hottest Battle*, and left exposed to the thickest Shot of the Enemy. And so he fell a destin'd Victim, not so much to the Valour or the Force of the *Ammonites*, as the Cruelty of King *David*, who following the Suggestions of a furious and unbridled Lust (of all wicked Counsellours the worst) heap'd Murder upon Adultery, as it were with the vain Hope of hiding one great Sin, under another that was yet greater.

AND now the Mouth of all Complaint being stopp'd, as he imagin'd, and every Obstacle removed, as soon as the Mock-Solemnity of Mourning was over, he made the Adulteress his lawful Wife, highly satisfied no doubt in the undisturb'd Possession of the Woman whom so many Difficulties had endear'd to him. *But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.* This Dream of Satisfaction lasted not long; he was awaken'd out of it by a startling Message from God, which under the Co-

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

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vert of a *Parable* enter'd into the very Se- S E R M.
crets of his Heart, and made him see the I.
Filth and Corruption of it with his own
Eyes, and detest, abhor and pronounce
Sentence against it with his own Lips.

THE Manner of the *Prophet's* Address,
and the Effect of it, the sacred Story thus
relates: *And the Lord sent Nathan unto* 2 Sam. xii.
David, and he came unto him, and said un- 1, &c.
to him, There were two Men in one City, the
one Rich, and the other Poor. The Rich
Man had exceeding many Flocks and Herds:
But the Poor Man had nothing save one
Little Ew-Lamb, which he had bought and
nourished up: And it grew up together with
him, and with his Children; it did eat of
his own Meat, and drank of his own Cup,
and lay in his Bosom, and was unto him as
a Daughter. And there came a Traveller
unto the Rich Man, and he spared to take of
his own Flock, and of his own Herd, to dress
for the Wayfaring Man that was come unto
him; but took the Poor Man's Lamb, and
dressed it for the Man that was come to
him. And David's Anger was greatly kind-
led against the Man; and he said to Na-
than, As the Lord liveth, the Man that did

SERM. *this Thing shall surely die. And he shall*
 I. *restore the Lamb four-fold, because he did*
this Thing, and because he had no Pity.

THUS spake *David*, as an Angel of God to discern Good and Evil, whilst fir'd with just Indignation to see this cruel Oppressor punished with the utmost Severity; when lo! to his great Surprise, he finds it bitterly retorted upon himself: And *Nathan* said to *David*, *Thou art the Man*: " Even, " that merciless, that pitiless Man, whom " thou hast pronounced not worthy to " live: For, hot as thine Anger is at present, hotter was thy Lust that moved " thee to take, not an Ew-Lamb from " poor *Uriah*, but the Wife out of his " Bosom, and after that his Life itself, to " make her more securely thine own. " What Injury can be more irreparable, " what Oppression more barbarous, than " that which Thou hast been guilty of? " Look no farther therefore, but turn the " Edge of thy Zeal against thyself: For " thou art the very Man, that worst of " Oppressors, that Adulterer, that Murderer, who, by the Words of thy own " Mouth, most justly deserves to die.

And

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

7

AND this Reprehension of *Nathan's* as S E R M.
it was very sharp, so it struck *David* with I.
deep Compunction, and humbled him in-
to a sorrowful Confession of his Sin. *And*
David said unto Nathan, I have sinned a-
gainst the Lord. A Confession not aggrava-
ted with Words (for Words might well be
swallowed up under that Horror and Con-
fusion with which he was overwhelmed)
but most undoubtedly proceeding from the
Depth of a contrite Heart; for it was ac-
cepted of God. *And Nathan said to Da-*
vid, the Lord also hath put away thy Sin;
Thou shalt not die.

HAVING now set the Fact that gave Rise
to the Parable of the Text in your full
View, with all its most remarkable Cir-
cumstances, I shall raise such Observations
from it as may be of daily Use to us, both
in the forming our Principles, directing
our Consciences, and correcting our Man-
ners. It is to be observ'd then from the
Case before us,

I. THAT impartial Reason is ever ready
to condemn any flagrant Iniquity. And
yet,

B 4

II. THAT

SERM. II. THAT the Prejudices of Interest and
 I. Lust may hinder Men from *discerning*, or
 at least *distinguishing*, in *Practice*, between
 right and wrong, even in the plainest Cases. Nevertheless,

III. THAT all notorious Iniquity is in Effect condemn'd by the universal Verdict of Mankind.

IV. NOTWITHSTANDING which, since thro' the Frailty of humane Nature, Iniquity still abounds in the World, that it is highly reasonable and requisite, that Men in a private Capacity should exercise mutual Charity and Tenderneſs to each other. But however,

V. To prevent the Overflowings of Wickedneſs, there is an absolute Neceſſity of good Government and ſtrict Discipline.

VI. THAT it is the Duty of People modestly to submit to the Reprehenſions and Caſtigations of their Governours, albeit they alſo are Men ſubject to like Paſſions and Infirmities with themſelves.

VII. BUT at the ſame Time Governours are under a higher Obligation to be themſelves blameleſs and irreproachable, that the Execution of their proper Office may
 not

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

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not turn to their greater Reproach and S E R M.
Condemnation.

I.

I. My first Observation is, that impartial Reason is ever ready to condemn any flagrant Wickedness.

AND this Observation is founded in the necessary Difference that there is between moral *Good* and *Evil*: Which Difference, in the Judgment of right Reason, is as discernible, as distinguishable, as white and black is to a good Eye, when nothing intervenes to obstruct the Sight, or misrepresent the Object. Some certain Acts there are so fit in themselves, so exactly correspondent to the Natures and Relations of Things, that Reason at first View discovers and pronounces them so to be without entertaining any Doubt, or requiring any Proof. To adore God, to reverence our Parents, to be grateful to our Benefactors, to be faithful and just, equitable and kind to Men, are acknowledg'd Acts of this Kind. The contrary to which, to blaspheme God, to male-trait our Parents, to be ungrateful to our Benefactors, to be unjust, perfidious, cruel, inhumane, these
Reason

SERM. Reason instantly condemns, as plainly abhorrent from Nature, and inconsistent with the Obligations arising out of the mutual Respects we bear to God and to each other. And the Sentence of Reason, when under no Impediment, is always constant and uniform in such Cases.

WHEN a particular Case happens to be entangled with something of Nicety, or the Quality of a particular Act is to be determin'd from Circumstances, there may possibly be Room for Doubt, or need at least of a more attentive Consideration, *E. G.* Whether my Non-compliance with such or such a Request of a kind Friend were deservedly to be tax'd of Ingratitude, or whether my Refusal to deliver up a Sum of Money deposited with me, to one who has all the Tokens of raging Madness upon him, were in Strictness to be deem'd a Breach of Trust; these are Points which might admit of some short Enquiry: But yet in general, every Man that has any Capacity of judging, will readily and boldly assert it, as a Thing in a Manner self-evident, that Ingratitude and Breach of Trust are Practices highly unreasonable,
and

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

II

and intrinsically evil; and with the same S E R M.
Breath he will not fail to assert, that to I.
return Evil for Good is abominable Ingratitude; to detain what hath been privately committed to one's Trust, purely because the Person from whom it was receiv'd, wants Proof to do himself right, is detestable Perfidy; and that to abuse Wealth, Strength or Power, in doing Wrong or offering Violence to the harmless and the helpless, is horrible Cruelty and Inhumanity.

AND the Judgment that Men are ready to pass in all such Cases, is so necessary a Result from the Nature of Things, that as it took its Rise from no positive Constitution whatsoever; so neither could it be alter'd by any such. And if it could be suppos'd, that some Monster of a Tyrant should publish a wise Edict, decreeing Ingratitude, Perfidy, Oppression and Cruelty to be Virtues, and their contraries Vices, he might e'en as well ordain Fire to be cooling, and Poison wholesome. For the Operations and Effects, neither of the natural nor the moral Agents, would be found obedient to this Law. Fire would still continue to burn,
and

SERM. and Poison to kill; and the Practice of these
 I. new-coin'd Virtues would inevitably destroy Mens Peace and Welfare, and dissolve the very Bonds of Society. And this would be every one's sober Judgment concerning them, notwithstanding any such arbitrary Imposition upon the common Sense of Mankind. For the Judgment of right Reason will no more vary than the Nature of Things; and by right Reason all such flagrant Iniquities will, and must be everlastingly condemn'd. There is no Exception to the universal Consent of Mankind in such Points, but what may well be suspected as fabulous, or is really anomalous and monstrous; and therefore tends rather to the Confirmation, than to the Disproof or Discredit of what is natural and regular. We see then what the Voice of Nature is; and *David* wanted not the Wisdom of an Angel to discern, what common Sense would have dictated to any indifferent Person in a like Case, namely, that the wealthy Oppressor, in *Nathan's* Parable was a barbarous Wretch, who deserved to be punished without Mercy, even because he himself was void of
 Bowels.

Bowels. And yet certain and well-found-
ed as the Judgment of right Reason is in
such Instances, clear and bright as the E-
vidence is that enlightens it, we cannot but
observe,

S E R M.
I.
~

II. THAT the Prejudices of Interest and
Lust may, and do hinder Men from discern-
ing, or at least distinguishing in Practice,
between Right and Wrong, even in the
plainest Cases; which Observation lays o-
pen the weak Side of humane Nature with
all its Corruption and Depravity: For al-
though the Notices of Virtue and Vice are
legibly graven in our Hearts by the Fin-
ger of God himself; although they are
imprinted still deeper by his revealed
Word; yet alas! wretched Men can make
a Shift to call off the Attention of Reason
where it should be most heedful, or to
darken it with the Fumes of Lust: They
can find out Ways of stilling or even stu-
pifying Conscience, or at least of suspend-
ing it from its Office, when it should be
most carefully employed; and in that un-
happy Interval, the Hurry of a violent Pas-
sion, the Allurement of some agreeable
Tempta-

S E R M. Temptation, or a strong Inclination to
 I. some *complexional* Vice, shall cause them
 to act as unreasonably, unaccountably and
 wickedly, as if they had no Lights to guide
 them; or rather shall carry them head-
 long, in the full Light of that Knowledge
 which they cannot blot out of their own
 Minds, into the most abominable Practi-
 ces, at the very Appearance of which one
 would think they should start back with
 Horror.

SUCH was the Case of *David* most ap-
 parently in the Text. How ready was he
 to condemn, how zealous to punish an
 unmerciful Oppressor, not knowing who
 he was, (for indeed the Person was but
 feigned) and yet how quietly, how patient-
 ly, could he tolerate in himself, both the
 Adulterer and Murderer? How securely
 could he take Pleasure in a Woman whom
 he *knew* to be the Spoil of another Man's
 Bed, and could no otherwise make his own,
 than by compassing the Death of her Hus-
 band? And he who was so tenderly sen-
 sible of what the poor Man was supposed
 to suffer, in having the Ew-Lamb he had
 so carefully foster'd made a Dish at his
 rich

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

15

rich Neighbour's Table; he, I say, could not possibly be ignorant, (and therefore how could he be insensible?) how much more the injur'd *Uriah* suffer'd; in having the beauteous *Bathsheba* ravish'd from him, by his King, to whom he might not say, *What dost thou?*

S E R M.
I.
~

THERE was no Room for Comparison between two Injuries of a Size so very unequal. *David* could not but know full well, had he the least attended to it, that the Wife one loves is as near and dear to him as his own Heart; that the Property of the Marriage-Bed is the most precious, the most sacred of all others; that a Wound in that nicest Part of Honour pierces the very Soul and Spirit, that it bleeds inwardly, and is born with Impatience, and heal'd if at all, with exceeding Difficulty; but that for the most part it imbitters all the Enjoyments, and destroys all the Comforts of Life. Which last, tho' the greatest Aggravation of the Dishonour done to a Man's Bed, is yet the only palliative Excuse that could have been made for the Cruelty of murdering *Uriah*: For it might be said with something of Truth (void of all Pity,

SERMON as the Murderer was) that it was so much the less cruel to take away a Life that before had been rendered joyless and comfortless. But as the Case was in Truth utterly incapable of any Palliation, 'tis marvellous *David* should not see, without being shewn, how irreparable the Injury was, of which he had been guilty. In the Heat of his Indignation against a supposed Oppressor, he put on the Severity of a Judge, more rigorous than the Law had directed; for he doom'd the Person to die, over and above the Legal Penalty of a four-fold Restitution. And at the very same Time he assumed the arbitrary Power of dispensing with himself, in so foul an Injustice and bloody a Cruelty, as left not so much as the Possibility of any Restitution: For had he turned his Eyes inward, he must unavoidably have seen, that it was morally impossible for him to restore Purity and Chastity to the Wife whom he had polluted with Adultery, and that it was naturally impossible to restore Life to the Husband whom he had made an inhumane Sacrifice to his Lust. The King was now all on the sudden a Slave to his *Lust*; Lust

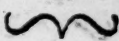
too hot and hasty to wait for cool Re-^{S E R M.}
flection, too headstrong to hearken to any ^{I.}
Check of Conscience, or yield to any Re-
straint. And yet alas! the Sweetness of the
stolen Waters he long'd for, did not satisfy,
but enflame so furious an Appetite; and
withal created a new and unnatural Thirst
after Blood, without which, as his Lust
still suggested, he could not take his fill
of unlawful Love, nor secure to himself
an undisturb'd Possession of his Beloved.

THUS he who was in other Points so
upright of Heart, so watchful of his Ways,
so fearful of Offending, plunged himself
all at once into the deepest Guilt; Guilt
that stared him full in the Face, and in
the most shocking and forbidding Appear-
ance: And all this great Wickedness was
contrived, executed, and accomplish'd, un-
der the Heat and Hurry of a most violent
Passion, before the Man could recover Se-
dateness enough, to enter into any Com-
muning with his own Heart, or so much
as to ask himself, what art thou doing?
or whither art thou going?

LORD! what is Man! how impotent, and
yet how ungovernable a Creature? How
C capable

SER M. capable of rebelling against the Light of
 I. his own Mind? How daring to offend in
 that infinite Presence from which he cannot flee? What is Reason against Passion? What is Flesh and Blood under Temptation? What is Nature without the Succours of Grace? What is Conscience out of God's keeping? Alas, with all the natural Lights and Guards which are placed about it, how insufficient to conduct or to preserve itself? O Lord! do thou vouchsafe to be our Guide and our Keeper! Guide us even where we see the Path! and keep us where we walk most securely! keep us more especially from ourselves, from our own deceitful Hearts, which are therefore the more desperately wicked, because they can be wicked (as *David* was in the Matter of *Uriah*) even against the clearest and the most convictive Knowledge. But to proceed. It may be

III. Observed farther, that although Men can and do sometimes suffer themselves to commit gross and grievous Sins, in open Contradiction to the inward Sense and Light of their own Minds, yet all notorious Iniquity

quity stands nevertheless condemn'd, and S E R M.
that, in Effect, by the universal Verdict of I.
Mankind. 

THIS is a Truth that will soon discover itself to every fair Enquirer. For however irregular Men may adventure to be in practice, it is no easy Matter to bribe the Reason and warp the Judgment of Mankind so far, as to make them Advocates even for their own Irregularities: And whenever they are press'd into the Service of this desperate Cause, they betray it plainly by their weak and wretched Defence of it. For it is certainly, and must needs be, the toughest Piece of Work in Nature, to root out those distinctive Characters of Good and Evil, which the Hand of God hath implanted in our Minds. In reality, 'tis he alone who planted that can pluck up in this Case; and whenever it is his Work, it is his *strange Work*, executed in Wrath, after the most insufferable Provocations: When Men have debased themselves into Brutes, and defaced the Image of their Maker by the most abominable Practices, he then judicially gives them up, not only to the Swing of their

SER M. own Lusts, but even to a *reprobate Mind*,
 I. i. e. to such a Blindness and Hardness of
 Heart, that *seeing they shall not see* the
 Turpitude of the vilest Actions, and *feeling* they *shall not feel* any Remorse for the
 most detestable Crimes.

BUT setting aside these rare and extraordinary Instances of a judicial Infatuation and Induration, there is (and always will be) unbiass'd Reason, and clear Discernment enough distributed among Mankind, to pass a just and general Sentence upon Wickedness of all Kinds and Denominations, even the Offenders themselves being Judges. Let Sinners once sit in Judgment upon each other, and they will all come under Condemnation in their Turns, and all with equal Justice. They will all be ready to pronounce clearly upon any Vice that shall come in question, if no secret Interest or Inclination shall happen to attach them to it: Nay they will not stick to condemn their own Guilt under another Appearance, or in another Man's Person: Or, perhaps, when inwardly conscious, they will still venture to fasten their Censure upon somebody whom they think

think more guilty than they are, either of S E R M.
the same Fault or a greater; sheltring the I.
mean while under the vain Conceit, that
they themselves shall appear innocent upon
the Comparifon. And even where People
are strongly addicted, or much accustom'd
to some grievous Sin, they shall plainly
discern, and loudly declare againſt the In-
jurioſneſs and Heinousneſs of that very
Sin, if they themſelves come to be Sufferers
by it, inſtead of being Actors in it to the
Detriment and Annoyance of others. And
generally ſpeaking, ſo tender is the Senſe
of Mens Minds with reſpect to all enormous
Wickedneſs, that, in a cool Seafon whilſt
their Inclination is yet untried, and the
Occaſion yet unforeſeen, they ſhall expreſs
a real and unfeigned Abhorrence of thoſe
very Crimes, (counting it an Indignity even
to be thought capable of them) which per-
haps in the Hour of Temptation they will
not ſcruple to commit, though never ſo flatly
contradictory to their ſoberer Sentiments.

AND what I have thus repreſented to
you, may be brought ſtill nearer to your
View in Particulars, and the View will
open itſelf directly from the Inſtance of

SER M. the Text. For *David*, you see, was a
 I. very free as well as severe Judge in the
 Case of the cruel Spoiler, whom *Nathan*
 had brought before him in Parable, he
 was under no Bias or Reserve, as not sus-
 pecting to be sure that his own great Soul
 was capable of so much Inhumanity. And
 yet out of the Words of his own Mouth,
 under another Name, he condemn'd him-
 self; and the Weight of the Sentence fell
 ten Times heavier upon his own Head:
 For what Spoiler so cruel as he, who first
 rob'd a Man of his Wife, and then of his
 very Life? On the other Hand, had the
 most hard-hearted Oppressor alive been
 to judge in the Case of Adultery and Mur-
 der, himself under no such Temptation,
 he would have instantly pronounc'd, that
 they were Crimes of the deepest Die, In-
 juries beyond all Reparation; and that the
 Fact of *David* in particular was the most
 barbarous, one of them, in the kind, that
 ever was heard of.

So again in another familiar Instance,
 if the *Covetous* Man were to sit upon the
 profuse and riotous Liver (a way that he
 himself hath no Relish of) he would right-
 ly

ly adjudge him to be an unprofitable Con-^{S E R M.}
sumer of what might be much better em-^{I.}
ploy'd; nay, an Abuser of himself and other
the good Creatures of God, a devoted Ser-
vant to his own vain Desires and filthy
Lusts, and one that hath no other Re-
gards, owns no other Master. And let
the *Prodigal* take the Cushion in his Turn,
and you shall soon have his summary Sen-
tence, that the other is a sordid Wretch,
unthankful for the Bounty of Heaven,
good to nobody, not to his nearest and
dearest Relatives, unnatural indeed both
to them and himself too, and all to make
his useless Heaps large enough against the
Time he is to leave them. 'Tis true the
Opposition between these two, may make
them the Freer in their Censures upon
each other; but the Judgment is well-
founded in both Cases, and arises not from
meer Opposition, but from the palpable
Evidence of the Thing: For every other
disinterested Person would judge of them,
just as they do of one another.

NAY, the *Covetous* Man, before we part
with him, shall be a Witness against him-
self, that one may be a forward and a ri-

SER M. gid Censurer (such is the Force of Truth)

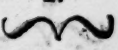
I. even of the Sin which he knows himself to be guilty of: For place but another Person at the Bar, whom he thinks to be more egregiously and scandalously fordid than himself, and he shall presently sum up the Evidence against him with all possible Exactness: He shall enumerate all his pitiful Tricks and vile Arts of getting, all his miserable Shifts and pinching Ways of saving, all the mortifying Rules and starvling Measures of his Oeconomy, the abandon'd Condition of his Children for want of Education, Provision, and common Necessaries; nothing of this Kind shall be forgotten, nor any thing else that is proper to dress out the Vice to the Height, and in its truest Colours. It is probable here too, that the Aggravations may be laid on the thicker, in Hopes to hide a lesser Degree of *Covetousness* under a greater, or to make the less, upon comparing, pass for commendable Frugality. But still you have his true and impartial Opinion, that *Covetousness*, where it really is, is an odious Vice; and that he himself, tho' he is actually guilty of it, would be

very loath to appear so. Thus again, it S E R M.
is usual for the proud Man to find out one I.
prouder if he can than himself; and after
nicely canvassing his whole Behaviour, and
openly exposing the most exceptionable
Parts of it, to give it peremptorily against
him: That his Rudeness is inexcusable, and
his Insolence insupportable. Here also we
may smell the Man's little Cunning in ta-
king the Scantling of Pride from one that
is loftier than himself, in Prospect of being
thought comparatively humble. But what-
ever others may have Reason to think of
him, we have his own Declaration that he
thinks of Pride as all reasonable Men do,
that it is in its Nature rude and insolent.

Once again, put two positive Men to-
gether, and you'll soon find them equally
bold in asserting, stiff in maintaining,
fierce in opposing, and impatient of Con-
tradiction. Take them apart, and each of
them shall instantly say of the other, did
you ever meet with any thing so confident
and over-bearing, so ill-temper'd and ill-
mannered? So that these two, so very apt
otherwise to disagree, are perfectly well
agreed in the positive Man's establish'd
Character,

SERM. Character, viz. that he is one of an ungentle, uncourteous, arrogant Temper and Behaviour. But of all other Things the *Smart Men* sometimes feel, from the Sin they love, is the most infallible Method to quicken and clear up their Judgment in these Points, and force them to pronounce a Righteous Sentence. If he who has been an habitual Enticer and Corrupter of other Women, should once come to have his own Daughter and Darling debauch'd, you may leave him, without the Help of Assessors, to determine, how heavy such a Stroke is to an afflicted Parent, how foul the Dishonour to the injured Person and Family: And whatever he determines for himself, when he is the unhappy Sufferer, the same he confesses against himself, as often as ever he has been the Trespasser.

BUT, not to tire you with Examples, let me add but one, to shew, that while the Affections are unengaged and Temptation at a distance, Nature will recoil and abhor the very Mention and Thoughts of any great Enormity. These were the Sentiments of *Hazael's* Heart, when *Elisha* was foretelling what Evil he would do, to the Children

Children of Israel; how that their Strong- SERM.
holds he would set on fire, and slay their I.
young Men with the Sword, and dash their 

Children, and rip up their Women with
Child. To which the Man's Answer was,
like one amaz'd to hear, what he could
not tell how to believe, that there should
be any thing so savage in his Nature:
And Hazael said, but what is thy Servant
a Dog, that he should do this great thing?
2 Kings ch. viii. ver. 13. And 'tis probable
had *David* been foretold by *Nathan*, how
he would act in the matter of *Uriah*, be-
fore he had given a loose to unchaste De-
sires, and sent his lustful Looks after *Bath-*
sheba, 'tis highly probable, I say, whatever
his future Conduct might have prov'd, his
present Answer would have been full of
just Abhorrence and Religious Dread, like
that of *Joseph's* to his Mistress. *How can*
I do this great Wickedness, and sin against
God? Gen. xxxix. 9.

I HAVE chosen these Examples, most of
them, out of common Life, the better to
illustrate the Observation I last laid down,
viz. that all notorious Iniquity doth, in
effect, stand condemn'd by the universal
Verdict

SERM. Verdict of Mankind. Men may, and too

I. often do take the Licence to be very irregular in Practice, but in point of Judgment they are regular enough and constant to themselves in these Matters. Let the strong Attachment a Man has to his own darling Sin be quite thrown out of the Question, and the Sinner shall be ready enough, as we have seen, to condemn any other Sin whatsoever, though not aggravated with more Guilt than his own. So that we have the concurring Judgment of all that can pretend to be disinterested; and for those who are interested, 'tis but fit they should be challeng'd off, and not suffer'd to be Judges where they are manifest Parties. But when Sinners pass Sentence upon other Sinners, and so all Sins come to be condemn'd in their Turns, we have the Concurrence of Persons who are so far interested to be favourable, as they are sensible that they themselves stand in need of Favour: For if any Sin were fairly defensible, it would be the common Interest of Sinners not to condemn, but to justify one another: Whereas in Truth, we have the guilty Parties themselves con-

senting

senting to their own Condemnation, to the S E R M.
Condemnation of those very Sins which I.
they most indulge: They too are ready to
join in the Sentence we find, if not directly, yet by Consequence, under another Name or another Person; if not deliberately, yet at unawares, if not as Actors, yet as Sufferers; if not with a perfect Consent, yet by a strong Impulse from within, that is scarce to be resisted. To sum up all in one Word, whenever the Mind of Man is cool, sedate, and unengag'd, it will not fail to give a clear and decisive Opinion against all apparent Iniquity: It never doth otherwise, but when 'tis under some very great Perturbation, or else a total Depravation, or utter Incapacity of Judgment.

I have been over nice perhaps, or rather over tedious, I fear, in dissecting the deceitful Heart of Man; but it hath help'd us to see very clearly, that however irregular its Motions may often be, the directive Principle is still right within, and points true even when most unheeded. And though we are naturally too prone (God help us) to Vice; yet 'tis one of the most
unna-

SERM. unnatural Things in the World to be vicious upon Principle. Let us hence then
 I. learn this useful Lesson, always to keep up the distinguishing Sense of Good and Evil, waking and lively in our Minds, to revere Conscience and hearken awfully to its Monitions, never to break loose from its Checks, nor so much as hope to get out of its Reach and Power. For vain will be the Attempt or else fatal the Success. If it should at sometimes prove but a careless or a drowzy Watcher, it will always be privy enough to all our Actions, even those that are most unheeded, to turn our Accuser upon Occasion, and will sooner or later rise up in Judgment against us, even for the Evil it too patiently suffer'd us to commit. *David* possibly might have imagined, that he had cast his Conscience into so deep a Sleep, that it would have slept on till Doomsday; and yet the Prophet, by whispering those four Syllables into his Ear, *Thou art the Man!* rouz'd him all at once out of his Lethargick Fit, into a painful Sense of inward Compunction and Contrition of Soul. And alas! wretched Sinners as we are, if
 we

the Ew-Lamb consider'd.

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we could make a Shift to continue in a S E R M.

Trance of Forgetfulness, or Suspension of Thought, till the last Trump, what would I.

that avail us? That dreadful Sound would pierce not only our deaf Ears, but all our benumm'd Senses with awakening Torment of Mind, alarming Fears, and most horrible Confusion. *If therefore our Heart*

condemn us, (or if thro' wilful Blindness it connives where it ought to condemn.)

God is greater than our Hearts, and knoweth all Things. And it will be as impossible at the Great Day to avoid the Cognizance of an Omniscient Judge, as to escape the Hands of an Omnipotent Avenger. God grant then that we may all walk so circumspectly and live so without Offence, or wipe out our Offences by a timely Repentance, that both living and dying, and at the Resurrection of the Dead, we may be free from the Reproaches of Conscience; so, and so only shall we be found blameless and unproveable in his Sight. *Amen.*

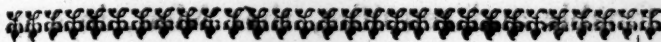
SERMON

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S E R M O N II.

*Nathan's Parable of the Ew-Lamb
consider'd.*



2 SAM. xii. 7.

*And Nathan said to David, Thou
art the Man.*



IN discoursing upon these Words, S E R M.
I propos'd to prove, II.

I. THAT Impartial Reason
is ever ready to condemn any
flagrant Iniquity.

II. THAT the Prejudices of Interest and
Lust may hinder Men from *discerning*, or

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D

at

S E R M. at least *distinguishing* in Practice, between
 II. Right and Wrong, even in the plainest
 Cases. Nevertheless,

III. THAT all notorious Iniquity is in
 Effect condemned by the Universal Ver-
 dict of Mankind.

THESE three Particulars I have already
 consider'd. I observe,

IV. SINCE Sin is so justly and generally
 condemn'd, nay and Sinners are for the
 most Part self-condemn'd, and yet can be
 very wicked notwithstanding, it is but rea-
 sonable and requisite, that Men, in a pri-
 vate Capacity, should exercise mutual Cha-
 rity and Tenderneſs to each other, if it
 were but to hide each others Nakedneſs.

It is a good and a just Thought of *Pliny*
 junior, * “ That he is to be esteem'd the
 “ best and the perfectest Man, who so for-
 “ gives others, as if he himself were a
 “ daily Offender, yet is as free from Of-
 “ fence, as if he could forgive no Body.”
 But, alas! as the World abounds with Ini-

* *L. 6. Ep. 22.* Optimum & emendatissimum existimo,
 qui cæteris ita ignoscit, tanquam ipse quotidie peccet; ita
 peccatis abstinere, tanquam nemini ignoscat.

quity, Candour and Innocence, are both S E R M.
equal Strangers in it. *Pliny's* was a beau- II.
tiful Character in Theory, but if we take
the Copy from Practice, the Reverse will
be found the truest Likeness of sinful Man.
Men are; commonly speaking, so liable to
offend, that they daily stand in Need of
Forgiveness from God and their Neigh-
bours; and yet they are as unmerciful in
their Censures, and as unforgiving, as if
they were perfectly blameless and spot-
less.

AND this is so much the prevailing Hu-
mour, the reigning Passion in Mankind,
that there is a Seat of Judgment at almost
every Table, in almost every Breast a Tri-
bunal erected; not to judge every one their
own Actions, which is the proper Office
of Conscience, but each to condemn their
Neighbours, which is the Usurpation of
Pride, and the Employment of Malice and
Ill-nature. And from such arbitrary Tri-
bunals, the Sentence of Condemnation is
sure to pass without any Abatements of
Mercy: Mens Faults are sure to be expo-
sed in a full Light, to be loaded with all
possible Aggravations, and magnified be-

S E R M. yond Measure. Which Inquisition, severe
 II. as it is, might be somewhat more tolerable, if *they* only were to set up for Judges, who are themselves exemplary for their Piety and Virtue, or at least not remarkable for the contrary. But so it happens, in common Observation, that the most faulty are the most apt to spy a Fault. They know so much Evil by themselves, that they cannot easily overlook it in others. And they fail not to publish it to the World, with their keenest Animadversions, in Hopes that the Appearance of a great deal of Zeal against some known Wickedness, may serve as a Cover for their own more disguis'd Vices; or with a View at least of marking out such as are as bad as themselves aforehand, if their own Bosom-Sins should have the ill Chance to be discovered.

Now besides the Exceptions that lie against the Exercise of this private kind of Jurisdiction, as commencing upon no Authority, and proceeding without common Equity; the Rashness and Rigour of the Process betray a double Defect in the Judges, *viz.* that they have no due Sense
 of

of humane Infirmities, no just Dread of SERM.
God's righteous Judgment. II.

FOR if Men were duly sensible of what frail Materials humane Nature is compounded, how ready we are to yield to Temptation, how often surpriz'd, how easily overpower'd by it, how soon enslav'd by vitious Habits, and brought under the Dominion of presumptuous Sins against the Conviction of our own Minds; I say, were all this seriously laid to Heart; of all other Sins, that of rash Judging could have the least Temptation in it. If there were nothing but mere Shame to restrain them, Men would rather be shy of looking too near at the *Mote* in a *Brother's Eye*, for fear of *discerning a Beam in their own*, by Reflexion: They would find no Relish in the malicious Pleasure of ripping up their Neighbour's Actions, lest their own should not well bear the open Light, nor too close an Inspection: They would be mighty tender of exposing or exaggerating the Faults of others, lest they themselves should be tempted and overtaken, and stand in Need of the kind Allowances of Candour and Charity.

SERM.

II.

THIS is a Plea for mutual Tenderneſs, that common Humanity muſt always allow. But if Sinners, (and Sinners we all are) would look up higher, and conſider that they are all accountable to a greater and ſeverer Judge than any Inquiſition upon Earth; that they muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of *Chriſt*, where the Secrets of all Hearts ſhall be diſcloſed, and every reproachful Word, every uncharitable Thought ſhall be weighed in an unerring Balance, and receive according to its Deſert; I ſay, would Sinners once attend to this awful Conſideration, it would effectually call them off from the foreign Amuſement of arraigning and condemning others; it would find them a much more concerning Employment at Home, of entering into the ſtricteſt Scrutiny with their own Hearts, and judging themſelves, that they be not judged of the Lord; it would force 'em to lay aſide the ſupercilious Brow of the Judge, and appear in all the Confuſion of Criminals; trembling leſt they ſhould receive at God's Hand Judgment *without Mercy*, even for ſhewing no Mercy to thoſe, who were no more guilty than themſelves.

AND

AND that such is the natural and most S E R M.
 ingenuous effect of a conscious Shame and II.
 Fear, may be seen in two notable Scripture
 Examples. The first is the Behaviour of
 the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* upon that wise
 Determination of our Saviour's, concern-
 ing the Woman that was taken in A-
 dultery, *He that is without Sin among* John viii.
you, let him first cast a Stone at her, which 7, 9.
when they heard, being convicted by their
own Conscience, they went out one by one, be-
ginning at the eldest, even unto the last; and
Jesus was left alone, and the Woman stand-
ing in the midst. The other is the perti-
 nent Reproof that was given to one of the
 Malefactors, for railing at the innocent Je-
 sus, even whilst hanging with him on the
 Cross, which rais'd a quite different Resent-
 ment in his Fellow.—*For the other answer-* Luk. xxiii.
ing, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear 39, 40, 41.
God, seeing thou art in the same Condemna-
tion? And we indeed justly, — but this
Man hath done nothing amiss.

AND from hence, and the Example of
 the Text, let us learn, not to be too hasty
 in casting Stones, that may easily be pick'd
 up, and thrown at our own Heads; not to

S E R M be too liberal in upbraiding others, lest the
 II. Reproach be turned against ourselves; and
 whilst we are magisterially passing Sentence upon those that are really guilty, let us take special Heed we don't put the Recrimination into People's Mouths, and provoke them to say, *Thou art the Man*; or as bad as the worst. But above all, let us not leave it in the Power of Conscience to rise up and witness against us at the last Day, in those unanswerable Words of the Apostle, *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou hast condemned thyself; for thou that hast judged, hast done the same Things, (or every whit as bad.) But we are sure that the Judgment of God is according to Truth, against them which commit such Things; and thinkest thou this, O Man, that hast judged them which do such Things, and done the same, that thou shalt escape the Judgment of God?*

Rom. ii.
 1, 2, 3.

BUT tho', in Consideration of our common Infirmities, Tenderness to others is but Tenderness to ourselves, lest we also be found under the same Condemnation; yet on the other Hand, if we consider the
 strange

strange Depravity of our Nature, and our S E R M.
Proclivity to Sin, and to sin daringly and II.
directly against Knowledge, we cannot but
be sensible of what I come now to ob-
serve,

V. THAT there is absolute Need of good Discipline and Government, to prevent the Overflowings of audacious Wickedness.

For if Men will adventure to be very wicked, notwithstanding all the wholesome Severity of Laws and legal Penalties, it may well be concluded, were all such Restraints taken off, that the Licentiousness of Manners would be unbounded and intolerable.

IT is true, God hath secured his own Honour, and establish'd the Law of Righteousness by the strongest of all Sanctions, that of everlasting Punishments in another World. And what else can operate so powerfully upon the Sinner's Fears? But yet, we find the *Things* which are not seen, though of infinite Moment, are not always believed, nor duly attended to, by such as do coldly believe them; but are apt to lose a great Part of their Influence with too many,

SERMON. many, as being invisible and future, and
 II. not striking so strongly upon Mens present
 Apprehensions.

It was necessary therefore that Sinners should be govern'd in this World by Measures adapted to their present State, such as would more sensibly affect them, and either lay their unruly Lusts under actual Restraint, or else soon make them see and feel the Fruits of their doings, to their Shame and Sorrow.

To this End God hath sometimes thought good to send an extraordinary Warning by an extraordinary Messenger, as *Nathan* was sent to *David*; and to punish an enormous Crime in some wonderful manner, or by such a signal Vengeance as might give a more sensible Smart, and leave a lasting Remembrance behind it; as the Adultery of *David* with *Bathsheba*, was punished by the Death of the Child which the Ardour of unlawful Love had made exceedingly dear to him.

BUT God's ordinary and standing Method of admonishing and chastising Sinners, is by the Agency of his Ministers and his Magistrates, who are both in their proper Sphere,
 fitly

fitly instrumental in the Suppression of Ir-
religion and Vice, and the Maintenance of
true Religion and Virtue.

S E R M.
II.
~~~~~

THUS, we know, it was given in special charge to the Priests and Levites of old to *warn the People not to trespass against* <sup>2 Chron. xix. 10.</sup> *the Lord;* and to the Prophets, to *hear* <sup>Ezek. xxxiii. 7.</sup> *the Word from God's Mouth, and warn* <sup>Isai. lviii. 1.</sup> *the People from him, lifting up their Voice like a Trumpet; to shew them their Transgressions,* and to denounce the Divine Judgments against them. In like manner the Ministers of the Gospel are empower'd to speak, *exhort, rebuke with all Authority;* and they are also arm'd with spiritual censures (*and those no vain Terrours*) to support and vindicate such their Authority.

AND a wise Appointment it was of God, and no less needful to the good Government of his People, to set apart an Order of Men, thus authorized, not only to teach, but to exhort and rebuke in his own Name, and in Virtue of his Commission. For in truth it is not so much through Ignorance and Weakness, it is more a great deal thro' Corruption and Naughtiness of Heart, that Men are so often tempted to sin, even against



S E R M. gainst Knowledge, and to continue habitually in the most notorious Sins without any Sense of Remorse. Thus it was in the Case of *David*: He needed no Teacher to instruct him in Right and Wrong, he was as an *Angel of God to discern Good and Evil*; yet he wanted a *Prophet* from God to make him duly sensible of the greatest Wrong, that, in the common judgment of Mankind, 'twas possible for any Man to be guilty of.

AND, I take it, the main End of our stated Preaching is, not so much to inform the Ignorant (that's more properly the *Catechist's* Office) as to remind those of their Duty, who though they do know it, are too apt to forget it; to admonish them of their Sins which they are too fond of indulging, and to stirr them up to Repentance, which they are too willing to delay. In short it is to encourage and incite them to the Practice of Virtue, to which there is so much Backwardness, and to exhort and deter them from Vice, to which there is so great a Propension in their corrupt Nature.

AND the Ministry of the Word is well  
seconded

seconded and rightly enforced by the Rod <sup>S E R M.</sup>  
of Discipline. Necessary indeed it was, <sup>II.</sup>  
both for the Prevention and Correction of  
greater Irregularities, that the Power of  
inflicting Censures should be lodged with  
the Church, to the Confusion of the Scan-  
dalous, and the Affrightment of the Pre-  
sumptuous. And what could be more re-  
quisite, than that they who first disgrace  
their Holy Profession by an impure Life,  
should themselves be put to open Shame,  
and thence made to see how filthy they  
are in the Eyes of God and Man, and that  
they should be segregated, if occasion be,  
from the sounder part of the Flock, to hin-  
der the spreading of the Contagion. And  
what more requisite again, than that the  
Refractory and Contumacious, who are lost  
to all Sense of ingenuous Shame, should have  
the *Terrours of the Lord* brought nearer  
to their View, and by being excluded from  
the Communion of the Church be alarm'd  
with the dreadful Notice, that, unless they  
speedily and thoroughly reform, they shall  
never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,  
but shall be cast into outer Darkness.

SUCH is the Nurture and Admonition  
of

SER M. of the Lord which he hath committed to  
 II. the Pastors of his Church, for the edifying  
 and well governing the People committed  
 to their Care: These the Curbs upon  
 Mens disorderly Passions, by which they  
 are to be held back from great and grie-  
 vious Offences, or reduced again to their  
 Obedience.

AND that these wholesome means may  
 not be render'd ineffectual by daring and  
 desperate Offenders, the Authority of the  
 Civil Magistrate comes in very fitly and  
 opportunely in Aid of that which is Spirit-  
 ual: For he too is the *Minister of God,*  
*for the Praise of them that do well, and for*  
*the Punishment of Evil-doers:* He, as Guar-  
 dian of both Tables, is to see (as far as his  
 own Inspection will reach) that Men per-  
 form their respective Duty towards God  
 and their Neighbour; as knowing, that  
 the latter cannot be conscientiously dis-  
 charg'd where it is not resolved into the  
 former as its Principle; and that no Man  
 is certainly and absolutely, either the good  
 Subject or the good Neighbour, who is not  
 first the good Christian.

AND seeing Religion is the best Ce-  
 ment

ment of Society, and the strongest Bond of Subjection, the Encouragement of Religion and Virtue, and the Discouragement of Irreligion and Vice, is doubtless the Magistrate's most important Care, and at once his Duty and his Interest. For this Purpose he is entrusted with the Dispensation of present Rewards and Punishments, as necessary Helps towards preserving Peace and good Order in the World; and the more so, because, as being *present*, they work more directly on worldly and carnal Minds; which are wont to be less affected with higher Motives, as consider'd at a Distance, and yet may in some Measure be restrain'd from vitious Courses, by the nearer Apprehension of some temporal Inconvenience. And this, no doubt, is a Check to many irregular and licentious Practices, which would otherwise breed great Disturbance and Mischief.

AND whereas some certain Crimes are more sensibly injurious, both to the Interest of the private Subject, and the Welfare of the Publick; the Wisdom of Nations hath always directed and enabled the Magistrate to prosecute such Enormities, with

S E R M.  
II.  
~



S E R M. with just Severity, either by pecuniary  
 II. Mulcts, or corporal Inflictions; or, if the  
 Thing be of very ill Consequence and Example, by capital Executions.

AND again on the other Hand, in Crimes of Spiritual Cognizance, when the Censures are in vain inflicted upon Persons of an obdurate Temper, or a fear'd Conscience, who dar'd to persist in their Wickedness, in open Defiance both of the present Discipline of the Church, and God's future Vengeance; in that Case the Secular Arm properly lends Assistance to the Apostolical Rod, and makes the Criminals feel the Smart of their Crimes, where alone they have Quickness of Sense, *i. e.* in the Loss of their Liberty, and other Legal Privileges, and even the Right of Disposing what's their own.

IN the Infancy of Christianity, whilst it was not encouraged but persecuted by the State, the Apostles of *Christ* (and they also who succeeded them) were furnish'd with supernatural Power, of delivering those who had incurr'd their heavy Censures over to *Satan*, and permitting him to torment them with Diseases, *For the*  
*Destruct-*

*Destruction of the Flesh, that their Spirits* S E R M.  
*might be saved in the Day of the Lord Je-* III.  
*sus.* But when once the Emperors of Rome I Cor.v.5.

became Nursing Fathers to the Church, the Sword of the Civil Magistrate supplied the Place of these miraculous Helps, which were after that Time withdrawn: And the Laws of *Christ*, and those standing Powers, which he had vested in the Governors of his Church, were piously reinforc'd by Sanctions suited to the most stubborn and intractable Tempers, and such Penalties as might touch them in their tenderest Part, by depriving them, as was intimated before, of what is always most valuable to a fleshly Mind. But this also with the charitable View of awakening them, if possible, into some Sense of their heinous Sins, and so making their present Suffering conducive to their future Salvation.

THUS the Ministers of God, both Civil and Spiritual, are and ought to be jointly conspiring and assisting to preserve good Order and good Manners in the World, and to set Bounds to the Excesses of licentious Wickedness: Nor can I be thought, in pursuing this Remark, to have wan-

S E R M. der'd from my Text. For you cannot but  
 II. have noted, as we went along, that the  
 feign'd Case of the devouring Oppressor, whom *David* had resolv'd to punish so severely, shews how needful the Zeal, and Courage and Resolution of the good Magistrate is, to correct great Abuses, and quell mighty Offenders: And at the same Time the Hardness and Blindness of *David's* Heart, whilst guilty himself of a much more irreparable Injury, shews what need there is of a Warning from God, at least by the ordinary Messengers and Ministers of his Word, to rouse self-indulging Sinners out of the Lethargy of Sin, or the Trance of Security.

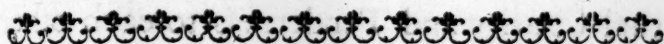


S E R M O N



## SERMON III.

*Nathan's Parable of the Ew-lamb  
consider'd.*



2 SAM. xii. 7.

*And Nathan said to David, Thou  
art the Man.*



FROM *David's Behaviour* SERM.  
upon Receiving this Warn- III.  
ing from the Prophet, I have  
already observed, ~~~~~

I. THAT impartial Reason  
is ever ready to condemn any flagrant Ini-  
quity. And yet,

E 2

II. THAT



SERM.

III.

II. THAT the Prejudices of Interest and Lust may hinder Men from *discerning*, or at least *distinguishing*, in *Practice*, between right and wrong, even in the plainest Cases. Nevertheless,

III. THAT all notorious Iniquity is in Effect condemn'd by the universal Verdict of Mankind.

IV. NOTWITHSTANDING which, since thro' the Frailty of humane Nature, Iniquity still abounds in the World, yet it is highly reasonable and requisite, that Men in a private Capacity should exercise mutual Charity and Tenderneſs to each other. But however,

V. To prevent the Overflowings of Wickedneſs, there is an absolute Neceſſity of good Government and ſtrict Discipline. I obſerve farther,

VI. THAT it is the Duty of People modeſtly to ſubmit to the Reprehenſions and Caſtigations of their Paſtors and Governours, albeit they alſo are Men ſubject to like Paſſions and Infirmities with themſelves.

WHEN *Elijah* the Prophet was ſent to *Ahab* with a Meſſage from God, he met  
with

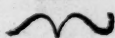
with this Accost at one Time, *Art thou he* S E R M.  
*that troubleth Israel?* And at another, *Hast* III.  
*thou found me, O mine Enemy?* *Abab had*  
*sold himself to work Wickedness,* and so much  
in Love he was with his Slavery, that the Man  
who brought him a Warning from God,  
was treated as a Disturber of his Peace, an  
Enemy to his Person and Government.

FAR different was *David's* Conduct,  
when, *Nathan* came charg'd with a like  
Message to him. He had sinned indeed  
with an high Hand, but was far from  
persisting in it with a stiff Neck; he did  
not let fall one angry or reproachful Word  
to the Messenger, nor did he offer a Tittle  
in Extenuation of the Crime. But as soon  
as *Nathan* had said, *Thou art the Man* —  
he replied immediately, under a vast Sur-  
prise of Grief and Confusion, — *I have sin-*  
*ned against the Lord.*

WHICH meek and humble Deportment  
of a mighty Prince (who might have been  
tempted to think himself above Controul)  
under the Conviction of a Crime, is an excel-  
lent Pattern for all those to imitate, who fall  
under Censure and Correction for any Mis-  
behaviour. They should learn from hence,

S E R M. never to stand up in Justification of that,  
 III. which they know is not to be defended; never to harden their Faces against Reproof, or under Chastisement, never to take up undue Resentments against those who are authorised to administer the same: In one word, never to revile those whom they ought to revere, nor to hold themselves excused from reforming the Wickedness of their own Ways, by ripping up the Infirmities and exaggerating the Defects of those that are set over them in the Lord; or perhaps, bringing a false, as well as railing Accusation against them.

FOR if, in the depraved State we now are, there is an absolute Need of strict Discipline and Government, to restrain the Excesses of licentious Wickedness; and if the Magistracy and Ministry were instituted of God to preserve good Order, and promote the Practice of Virtue and Religion in the World, as was shewn under the last Head; certainly a due Submission both to the Magistrate, and the Minister, in the Execution of their proper Office, is equally necessary, and the Submission will be equally due to the Ordinance of God, whoever



whoever the Persons be, and how unworthy soever, who are vested with his Authority. For the Authority of God is still the same, his Ordinance is alike worthy of our Regard and Observance, whatever the personal Defects may be of such as are entrusted with the Administration of it. If the Magistrate, that is to execute the Laws against Profaneness and Immorality, be himself profane and immoral; if the Pastor, that is to declare the Wrath of God against all Unrighteousness, be himself an ungodly Person; if the Reprover be an Offender in the very Point, that he condemns, this takes not off from the Force of the Law, nor the Sacredness of the Institution, this does not in the least exempt those who are subject to Authority, from their Subjection and Obedience. Were that the Case, there would be an End at once of all Discipline and all Government. For the Men who are in Authority have, and always will have their Share of humane Infirmities, as well as those who are under it: And if no Faults were to be corrected or reprov'd but by Men themselves faultless, all Faults would go uncorrected



S E R M. and unprov'd, for want of an Officer  
 II. competently qualified to execute that  
 Trust: And consequently the very Institution of the Magistracy and the Ministry would be void, and of none Effect.

BUT I think it is too absurd for any Body to maintain, that there is no Regard due to the Magistrate in the Execution of his Office, because he himself has Faults of his own to answer for. The open Maintainer of such an Opinion, would soon be convinc'd by his Feeling and Experience. But altho' Men will not make so bold as this comes to, with the civil Magistrate, yet with their Ecclesiastical Guides they really do. At least the Treatment that the Clergy too often meet with, looks as if Men were verily persuaded that the Teachers Faults are the People's Justification; as if they thought themselves licens'd to sin, because their Teachers, who should be Examples to the Flock, are found in the Number of Sinners. At this Rate the Dispensers of the Word and Sacraments, should have been Angels and not Men: And perhaps Angels themselves would not have pleased. But Men as they are, and frail like other Men,

Men, they are pretty sure to have their S E R M.  
Frailties at every Turn expos'd, their real III.  
Faults unmercifully aggravated, and pre-  
tended Crimes calumniously laid to their  
Charge by the vicious and libertine. But  
to such harden'd Sinners, I would say with I Cor. vi.  
the Apostle, *Know ye not, that the un-* 9, 10.  
*righteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of*  
*God? Be not deceived; neither Fornicators,*  
*nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Effemi-*  
*nate, nor Abusers of themselves with Man-*  
*kind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunk-*  
*ards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall*  
*inherit the Kingdom of God.* And if they  
who are guilty of these or any other known  
and grievous Sins, could truly alledge, that  
so also are some of the Clergy, alas! what  
would this avail them? If the Expounders  
of the Law are the Transgressors of it,  
that does not evacuate the Law itself; if  
they who teach others, teach not them-  
selves, they are plainly self-condemn'd, be-  
cause they must know and teach otherwise  
than they practise: And being left inexcus-  
able themselves, it cannot be imagin'd,  
that their Example should be an Excuse  
for others in the Commission of a notorious  
Crime.

SERM. Crime. It is an *easy* thing for one that  
 III. has a Beam in his own Eye, to spy, or to  
 fancy that he sees, a Mote in his Teacher's;  
 but let not such a one therefore hoodwink  
 his own Conscience, and grow fond of his  
 Spiritual Blindness. *David*, if he had been  
 disposed to make use of such a Pretext,  
 might have rejected the Message that *Nathan*  
 brought him; by telling him, as *Ahab* did *Elijah*,  
 that *he was his Enemy* and the *Troubler of his Peace*.  
 But he, far from thus prevaricating with God  
 and his own Soul, instead of reviling God's  
 Messenger, became his own Accuser, and was  
 instantly humbled into a sorrowful Confession  
 of his Sin.

AND such should be the Ingenuity, such  
 the Humility of all who are truly penitent;  
 they should suffer the Word of Exhortation  
 and Reproof patiently, and receive it with  
 an obedient Ear; they should not despise  
 the Pearls of Heavenly Truth, nor turn  
 again and rent the Messengers of it, purely  
 because that Treasure they bring is contained  
 in Earthen Vessels. In one Word, the Law  
 of God is sacred, and inviolably to be  
 observ'd, although the Ex-  
 ponders

pounders of it should be never so criminous and wicked themselves. This is a Case clearly decided by him, whose Life was as pure and perfect as the Law itself, even the Holy *Jesus*, and that too in behalf of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, against whose Hypocrisy and Corruption he denounced so many Woes. Notwithstanding which, we have his express Determination, *Then spake Jesus to the Multitude and to his Disciples, saying, The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's Seat: All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe, and do; but do not ye after their Works: for they say and do not.* The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were in the Seat of Authority, and the Authority was God's; and the Obedience of the People was due to God's Law and his Ordinances, when rightly interpreted, although the Interpreters themselves were grievous Offenders in the Sight of God. And the Case, and the Reason of the Case is still the same, and always will be.

AND having thus shewn you how this Point is decided by the Judgment of our Blessed Saviour himself; sure no Man can be capable of thinking that I have been apologizing



SERM. gizing all this while for a vitious Clergy; for  
 III. that injurious Thought would carry the  
 ~~~~~ Imputation, where it would be Blasphemy  
 to fix it. But the Truth is, as there is no
 Room for such an Apology, nor need of it I
 trust in our own Case, generally speaking, so
 it was none of my Intention, in any thing
 I have said, to plead the Cause or extenuate
 the Guilt of the wicked Minister, any more
 than of the wicked Magistrate, both of
 which I take to be severely accountable for
 their own Misdoings. Accordingly, I have
 made it my Observation,

VII^{thly} and lastly, THAT Pastors and Governours are under the highest Obligation to keep themselves all that may be, free from any great Blame or Blemish, lest the Execution of their proper Office should turn to their greater Shame and Condemnation.

THIS is too plain to be disputed by any Body that lends the least serious attention to it. For our Spiritual Pastors and our Civil Magistrates are both in their several Capacities, the Ministers of God, and honoured with a Trust from him; the Trust of the Spiritual Pastor is to declare and inculcate

inculcate the Word of God, to administer S E R M.
sober Admonition and sharp Reproof as III.
there may be Occasion, to win, and to urge
Sinners to their due Obedience, by setting
the Tenour of the divine Promises and
Threats before their Eyes, such as relate
chiefly to another World. And where all
other Motives are less regarded, to call in
the Severity of Discipline as a necessary
Enforcement to sound Doctrine. The
Trust of the Civil Magistrate is to pro-
mote the Practice of true Religion, and
Virtue by humane Laws, strengthen'd by
temporal Sanctions, and to see the legal
Penalties duly inflicted upon the Disorderly
and Licentious.

THIS their Respective Trust they are
bound diligently and faithfully to execute,
of which also they must expect to render
a strict Account. And whatsoever, thro'
their own voluntary Default, indisposes or
unfits them for the Performance of the
Duty incumbent on them, will certainly
be accounted a Neglect of Duty and a
Breach of Trust. And without doubt
nothing can more indispose or unfit a Man
for the due Discharge of the Pastoral Office,

SER M. or the due Exercise of the Magistrate's Authority, than a vitious Conversation and lewd Example.

III.

FOR when Men have this visible Stain upon their Character, or know themselves to lie too open to the Suspicion, they will be under a strong Temptation either to decline their Duty in each of these Respects, or at least to do it very remissly and with great Partiality and Indulgence towards Vice, in one Kind or other. For they who are addicted to Vice themselves can have no true Zeal to see it reform'd in others, no Concern for God's Honour, no Compassion for the Souls of Men, no conscientious Motive to incite them to exert their proper Authority for the Reproof or Correction of those who are under their Care or Power. But worldly Motives they will always have to Connivence and Indifference; the Consciousness of their own Guilt and the Fear of having it exposed, and being openly disgraced for it, will always stand, as a Lion in the way, to affright them from their Duty. And this very Apprehension will for the most Part be enough to make the Magistrate wholly unactive,

or

or to disarm him of his Courage and Vi- S E R M.
gour at least in the Execution of the Laws III.
against Profaneness and Immorality: It will
go near too, to strike the Preacher quite
dumb, or at least much soften his Plain-
ness and Boldness of Speech, and blunt the
Edge of his Severity in rebuking the Faults
of his Flock, even though they loudly call
for it. To say the least that can be, when
Men are thus conscious, they will hardly
fail to shew a Tenderness and Indulgence
towards those particular Sins, of which
they know themselves guilty. If *Nathan*
had brought his information directly against
one that had been an Adulterer, and a
Murderer, it is more than probable, the
Sense of Guilt and meer Shame, would
have quenched the Heat of *David's* Zeal,
to see another Person so severely punished,
when he had deserv'd no less himself.
From his real Conduct, when it appeared
to be his own Case, we may presume he
would have been first reveng'd upon him-
self by the bitterest Repentance, before he
would have acted as a Minister of Ven-
geance, against a person guilty of the same
Crimes with himself.

SERM.

III.

AND as the Sound of those few Words from the Mouth of the Prophet, *Thou art the Man*, threw King David into the utmost Confusion, because his own Heart smote him at the same time ; so doubtless the very Fear of such a Recrimination, must make vicious Magistrates, or Ministers, very backward, timorous and tender in chastising Vice, (especially the Vice they love themselves) because they are sensible 'tis in the power of all their Neighbours to bring the Accusation back to their own Door.

AND as this guilty Shame or Fear leaves Men who are vicious themselves, but little Spirit or Inclination to be the Reprovers or Correctors of Vice in others, although it be the Duty of their Place and Calling; so it makes them indeed the most unfit Persons that can be for such a Charge, and the most unlikely to succeed well in the good Work. For 'tis but too natural for People, when they are taxed, though never so justly, with their Faults, to seek for Shelter under any Excuse they can lay hold on; and they will hope to ~~keep themselves in tolerable Countenance, if they have it~~ but

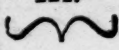
keep themselves in tolerable Countenance if SER M.
they have it but to say, that they are no worse III.
than their Neighbours; especially if they can
alledge, that their Teachers or Governours
are as bad as they; this they will be hasty
enough to catch at, even perhaps when
there is no Truth in it at the Bottom; but
if there be, they will not fail to insist on
it, as thinking it the readiest Way to divert
a Prosecution, or skreen themselves from
Censure. When Men, who are fond of their
Sins, have such a Refuge as this, they will
be apt to despise all Correction and Reproof,
as being perswaded, that neither the Ma-
gistrate nor the Minister are much in ear-
nest, when they put on the Brow of Au-
thority, to threaten or reprehend those
Practices in Others, in which they are
known to indulge themselves. Instead of
hearkening to the best Cautions and the
wisest Prescriptions that can come from
such Hands, it will be thought sufficient to
give 'em back the Proverb as a seasonable
Memento, *Physician heal thy Self*: Under
the Provocation of being chastised by such
as are as bad as themselves, they will pre-
sume their own Blemishes to be very de-

S E R M. cently cover'd under the Reproach that may
 III. easily be turned against the Chastisers, in
 Rom. ii. those unanswerable Words of the Apostle;
 21, 22, 23.

Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a Man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a Man should not commit Adultery dost thou commit Adultery? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege? Thou that makest thy Boast of the Law, thro' breaking the Law dishonourest Thou God?

Now, altho' they, who are so. inexcusable themselves, can never furnish any Excuse to others for transgressing the Laws of God, yet since there is so much more Force in an ill Pattern to corrupt our frail Nature, than there is in a good Precept to reform it, and since this is so apt to be the Occasion of Men's hardening themselves in their Impenitence, it is most evident that the Magistrate is under the strictest Obligation to support and invigorate his Authority, by a virtuous Example; and the Minister of the Word to take heed to himself, as well as to his Doctrine, that the Name of God be not blasphemed, and the

End

End of his Ordinances defeated thro' the S E R M.
Unworthiness of those, who ought to adorn III.
their Office, by an unblameable Conver-
sation. 

AND without all doubt, as the Obligation of Persons so entrusted, is very strict, so their Account will be very severe, because their Offences must needs be exceedingly aggravated in the Sight of God.

FOR in the first Place, they whose Business it is to teach Others their Duty, or to keep them within the Bounds of it, if they transgress themselves, they must do it presumptuously, and directly against Knowledge; for they cannot reasonably be supposed to be ignorant of their own Duty; or if they be, even that will be a great Addition to their Sin, because it must proceed from a wilful Neglect. Then it must be remembred, that the Transgressions of those who are in the Ministry or the Magistracy, over and above the proper guilt of the Sins themselves, are chargeable with a Breach of Trust, as having by their own Misbehaviour, unqualified themselves for the faithful and successful Execution of their Office: Which will assuredly add

S E R M. to the Burden of their Account. Besides,
 III. the Scandal that is given by Men in Authority, affects their Authority, while it exposes their Persons; it brings the Office many times into Contempt, and Religion itself not seldom into Question; which must needs be an Enhancement to their Guilt. For we read 1 Sam. ii. 17. *That the Sin of the Young Men was very great before the Lord, when Men (by Reason of their Vileness) abhorred the Offering of the Lord.* Add to all this, that the ill Examples of Magistrates and Ministers, have too fatal an Influence in corrupting the Manners of the People. For as there is a great Proneness to Evil in our Nature, so Men are generally pretty apt to tread in the Steps of their Superiours, especially when they lead the same Way that their own Inclination bends. In vain shall Virtue and Religion be authoritatively taught and enjoin'd, when the Authority destroys itself, by the immoral and impious Practices of those who exercise it. Their Precepts, in that Case, will be but lightly regarded, but their Practises will be industriously imitated—*It must needs be that Offences come*—such Examples will
 always

always be Snares in the way of frail and heedless People — but *Wo to that Man by whom the Offence cometh.* When they who

SERM.
III.

are by Office the Guardians of the Law, and Promoters of Virtue, are in Fact notorious Law-breakers and loose Livers; when the Reprovers of the Works of Darkness, are Partakers in them; when the Shepherds lead their Flocks astray, and the Watchmen are the Betrayers of their Charge; how great must the Offence be, that cometh by their Means? how miserable the Havock and Ruin of Souls by them occasioned? and how strict will the Inquisition be, when God shall come to require the Blood of those Souls at their Hands? How intolerable the Punishment that they shall be doomed to, under the accumulated Load, not only of their own personal Guilt, but of all that they have been accessory to in others, of all the Wickedness that hath been propagated in the World by the Contagion of their Examples?

FROM whence and from all the foregoing Considerations, it is most apparent, that our Pastours and Governours, as remembering the Account they must one Day give,

SERM. are under the highest Obligation, to keep
 III. themselves free from Blame or Blemish,
 all that is possible, lest the Execution of
 their proper Office, should turn to their
 greater Reproach here, and their heavier
 Condemnation hereafter.

I have now gone through the several
 Observations which I raised from the Text,
 and which I judged to be of Use for the
 better regulating our Judgment and Con-
 duct, in many Cases, and Occurrences of
 common Life.

AND let it be a standing Memento to us
 all, whilst our Indignation is kindling, or
 our Zeal growing warm, against the
 Wickedness of Others, never to lay our
 selves open to the Retortion in the Text,
Thou art the Man, never to leave it in the
 Power of Superior or Inferior; Foe nor
 Friend, nor even our own Hearts, to fast-
 en that Reproach, or pass that Sentence just-
 ly upon Us.



S E R M O N IV.

*Nathan's Parable of the Ew-Lamb
consider'd.*



2 SAM. xii. 7.

*And Nathan said to David, Thou
art the Man.*



SHALL now only crave S E R M.
your Patience while I close IV.
this Subject, with a Caution ~v~
or two, naturally enough
resulting from the Text, and
those Remarks upon it, which I have al-
ready set before you. And,

F 4

I. THE

SERM.

IV.

1 Cor. x.

12.

I. THE first Caution shall be in those Words of the Apostle, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take Heed lest he fall.*

AND verily, if it be duly consider'd, how frail our Nature is, and how full of the latent Seeds of Corruption, which grow up many Times into vitious Acts and Habits, very suddenly and surprizingly; how deceitful our Hearts are, how untrue to their own inward Sense, and how capable of being desperately wicked, against the clearest Knowledge and most express Warning: I say, were all this duly consider'd, we should need no other Monitor, to make us very circumspect and watchful of all our Steps, lest we fall, and fall unexpectedly, at a Time when we have no Apprehension of Danger, but think ourselves in a State of Security.

FOR this, if our own Experience did not witness to it, is no more than hath frequently happen'd to others, as we find it recorded in holy Writ. Now, as the Apostle tells us, *All these things happened unto them for Ensamples, and they are written for our Admonition.* — The Backslidings and Transgressions

gressions of Gods chosen People, and some of his most eminent Servants are therefore left upon Record, that they might serve as Sea-marks to others, to prevent them from splitting upon the same fatal Rocks. And the Rocks of Offence are so many in our Course through a World of Temptations, that unless they be very heedfully observed and avoided, Men may make Shipwreck of their Souls, when least they fear it.

Who could have thought, for Instance, that the People of *Israel* whom God had deliver'd with his out-stretch'd Arm, out of the Land of *Egypt*, where they had seen Idolatries of the grossest Kind, and in the most contemptible Appearance; who could have thought that this very People, after such a miraculous Deliverance, and such a continued Series of Wonders, should themselves turn Idolaters, and such stupid Idolaters, as to set up a molten Calf, made out of their own Ear-rings to rival God, and rob him of the Glory of being their Deliverer? Saying, *These be thy Gods O Israel, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt?* Is it not most astonishing, that a People preserv'd and sustain'd by daily

Proofs

S E R M.

IV.

Exod.

xxxii. 4.

SER M. Proofs of Gods Almighty Power and all-
 IV. sufficient Goodness, should be thus tempted
 to revolt from him, and trust to the Idols
 of their own Making. And if they who
 were so loudly warn'd, and so strongly
 guarded against the Sin of Idolatry, could
 nevertheless be guilty of such a prodigious
 Degree of Baseness and Sottishness; what
 Sin is there of which our degenerate Na-
 ture is not capable; what Temptation, a-
 gainst which our Frailty is sufficiently for-
 tified?

THUS again in the Case of *David*; could
 it easily have been imagin'd, that such a
 Man as he, so well instructed in his Duty,
 and so careful of his Conduct, and so un-
 blemish'd in every other part of it, should
 have been plung'd deep in the Guilt both
 of *Adultery* and *Murder*? If *Nathan* had
 been sent to foretel all this before it came
 to pass, he might probably have been sus-
 pected by others as a false Prophet, and
 heard by *David* with Impatience enough,
 as one who might think himself hardly ca-
 pable of such abominable Wickedness. So
 disagreeable it was to his established Cha-
 racter, and the whole Tenour of his Con-
 versation.

versation. He has the Testimony of the S E R M.
sacred Historian, *that his Heart was per-* IV.
fect with the Lord, except in this very Mat- I Kings
ter; and we find upon other Occasions, xv. 5.
that his Conscience was tender even to Scrupulosity. It was so remarkably, when his Heart smote him, as we read, because he had cut off *Saul's Skirt*, when others said; *Behold the Day of which the Lord said, Behold I will deliver thine Enemy into thine Hand, &c.* he only took his Skirt to shew that his Life had been at Mercy. And yet, because the Suggestions of those who were about him, or possibly the first Motions of Anger boiling up within him, might have prompted him to take his Revenge; he began to fear that he had ventured beyond his Bounds, and condemn'd himself for too near an Approach to the Sin that he had so carefully avoided. And is it not amazing that this tender-hearted, this timorous Man, who could hardly acquit himself of Blame, even after he had spared his Blood-thirsty Enemy, should make a bloody Sacrifice of the Life of the innocent *Uriah*, to the unlawful Love he had entertain'd for his Wife? And if a Person so
conversant

SERM. conversant in Gods Laws, and so observant
 IV. of them, so scrupulous to offend, and so ready to start at the very Shadow of an Offence, could fall so deliberately into two of the most wounding and wasting Sins that are, who can think himself secure of Standing? And how suspicious should we be (even the best of us all) of our own naughty Hearts, even when they seem to be best disposed! How jealous over ourselves lest we should be tempted to the very Sin, which, whilst Temptation was at a Distance, we could not think of without Abhorrence! And how infinitely tender of violating our own Consciences in any Point, lest we be led headlong, as *David* was, at once into the most presumptuous Sins, and brought entirely under their Dominion?

AND there is the more Need of all this vigilant Care, lest the Deceitfulness of Sin, in Confederacy with that of our own Hearts, should betray us insensibly into some great Vice, and leave us under its Power, and yet possess us at the same Time, with a good Opinion of the State of our own Souls. It is but too natural for Men who do not search the Source of their Corruptions to
 the

the Bottom, to acquit, and even applaud S E R M.
themselves, upon very lame and imperfect IV.
Performances. If they be but tolerably diligent in the Observance of those Duties, the Omission of which would look like a Neglect or Contempt of Religion; if they be cautious in refraining from those Sins, the Commission of which would bring certain Scandal, if not present Punishment upon them; if for instance, they be frequent in their Attendance upon God's Worship in publick and private, if they abstain from all Intemperance and Uncleaness, and whatever is branded in common Speech with the Name of Immorality: They pass for innocent, and good perhaps, in their own Account, though they hug and cherish some darling Vice at the same Time, which is equally forbidden in Scripture; and would be as much condemn'd by the impartial Verdict of Conscience, as those very Sins that they most abominate.

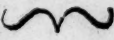
A NOTABLE Example of this we have in Covetousness, than which, nothing favours more of the earthly, nothing less of the heavenly Mind, nor can any thing be more inconsistent with the Service of God,
2 than

SER M. than that of *Mammon*, as our Blessed Sa-

IV. viour himself has positively determined.

And yet because it is not precisely defined, how much a Man is to spend, and how much to spare, in Proportion to his Substance; because there is not a visible Line drawn, between commendable Frugality, and sordid Parsimony; many Men have been avaritious to a scandalous Degree, who have appeared to be otherwise, of pious and virtuous Dispositions, constant at their Devotions, regular in their Lives, and without any Blemish upon their Character, excepting as to this mean-spirited, degenerate Vice, that grows upon them with their Age, and makes them then cling fastest to the Earth, when they should be in good Earnest preparing for a better World. And all the while this sneaking Vice, of which these good Men make so slender an Account, is rank'd in Scripture with Crimes of the deepest Dye, with the grossest Immoralities.

I PRODUCE this as too sensible a Proof, how blind the Heart of Man is to its own Follies, when once enslaved to any sinful Lust, how fond of imposing upon itself by empty Appearances, how partial in

judging of its own Defects, and how prone S E R M.
to trust to its own Innocency, when there IV.
is no good Ground for the Assurance; 
which added to the Example of the Text,
strongly inculcates the Caution I have al-
ready given you, *Let him that thinketh he*
standeth, take Heed lest he fall.

II. THE second Caution I would leave
with you is this, " Let him that falleth,
" especially into any grievous Sin, strive to
" recover himself by a timely Repentance".
And this also is fitly suggested from the
Example of the Text.

MEN's principal Care indeed should be,
to shun all flagrant and notorious Crimes,
such as cannot be committed but in full
Opposition to the Light of their own
Minds; because such Crimes as these do
lay waste the Conscience at once, and leave
Sinners in an open and level Way, to pro-
ceed without Check or Restraint, from E-
vil to Evil, till they have' filled up the
Measure of their Iniquity. This is evi-
dently seen in the swift Progress that *David*
made in Wickedness, after he was once
engaged in his unlawful Amour with *Bath-*
sheba.

SER M. *sheba*. His first Stratagem, in Respect of
 IV. what followed, might seem to be comparatively innocent: That was only to call in the Husband in due Time, to be the Concealer of the Injury and Dishonour done to his Bed, by accompanying with his Wife; that the Child she went with might pass for his own: But this Plot miscarrying, *David's* Invention was soon at Work again; the Affair being in so ill a Situation, 'twas thought the readiest way of Dispatch, to get rid of the Husband all at once, and by that Means, to secure a Property in the Wife. This was immediately resolv'd upon, and by a base and dishonourable Contrivance executed; and all without the least Difficulty or Scruple. For his Conscience had already swallowed the foul Sin of Adultery, and therefore was not so squeemish, as to reject the bloody one of Murder, when once it was judg'd serviceable to the Accomplishment of his Desires.

MEN ought to watch therefore over their own Hearts with the utmost Jealousy, and endeavour to keep themselves clear of all such heinous Offences, because they are big with Consequences more and worse than

than can be well imagined. And if any SERM.
one be so unhappy, as to be led into some IV.
great Temptation, and overpower'd by it, he must not yield himself up servilely to obey the foolish Lust that enticed him to sin, but he must bethink himself in Time, what a dangerous Precipice he stands upon, and how unavoidable his Ruin is, in all Probability, if he should dare to proceed; and therefore he must make Haste with all his Might, to deliver his Soul from the Snare whilst he may, or else he will find himself led captive at Will from one Wickedness to another, and chain'd down at last to the Oar, to do all the vilest Works that his Task-master the Devil can employ him in.

SUCH will be the miserable Effect of a confirmed Habit in any presumptuous Sin. So it is notoriously in the Sin of Covetousness; on which Account the *Love of Money* is deservedly said to be *the Root of all Evil*. For they that will be rich i. e. whose Hearts are entirely set upon Riches, fall into *Temptation and a Snare*, 1 Tim. vi.
and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts 9, 10.
which drown Men in Destruction and Per-

SERMON. *diction.* At first, it may be, when the Love
 IV. and Desire of Riches takes Possession of
 the Heart, Men may content themselves
 with the use of such Means as are barely
 lawful and just, though perhaps not very
 consistent with Charity. But if this be a
 Method that feeds not the greedy Appetite
 fast enough, the Desirableness of the End
 will go near to remove all Scruples about
 the Lawfulness of the Means, if any can be
 found that seem more expedient. This
 carries them by large Steps into all the sly
 Arts of circumventing, and over-reaching
 the Ignorant and Unwary, or the yet baser
 Practises of oppressing, and devouring the
 Poor and Helpless. But if all this Haste
 should be thought too slow, as sometimes
 it is, the next Recourse probably will be
 to some well plotted Fraud or Cozenage,
 that without Discovery will do their Work
 at once, and if discovered will do their
 Work at once too, by bringing them to
 that Shame and Punishment which is the
 just Reward of Cheats and Thieves, even
 in this World. By these Degrees does the
 Vice of Covetousness many times grow up
 to an amazing Height of Villany. And al-
 though

though every covetous Person is not thus abandon'd to all Sense of Honesty, and ripe for the Practice of any Knavery, yet he that once indulges a Desire that is (if not insatiable) so very seldom satisfied, cannot tell how far he shall be tempted to go in Pursuance of his main Design, nor what Means he may be driven to use, in order to compass it. And therefore whosoever is the least addicted to this Vice, should make it his earliest Care to take the Evil Root out of his Heart, lest in the End it prove fruitful of some unthought of Wickedness.

BUT, of all other Sins, the Habits of Uncleaness are most wretchedly ensnaring and enslaving; there is none that takes a Man more out of his own Power, or sets him at a greater Distance from the Influences of divine Grace; and consequently leaves him more at the cruel Mercy of the Tempter. *Solomon's* elegant Description of the young Wanton caught in the Toil of the subtle Harlot, gives us so strong an Image of the Misery and Slavery of such a Profligate, as would move any Heart but his, which is grown as hard as

S E R M. the Forehead of his graceless Companion,
 IV. to whose Enchantments he hath sold him-
 Prov. vii. self. And therefore, *he goeth after her as*
 22, 23. *an Ox to the Slaughter, or as a Fool to the*

Correction of the Stocks till a Dart strike
through his Liver; as a Bird hasteth to the
Snare and knoweth not that it is for his Life.

His Folly and Shame, the Waste of his Health and Estate, the Distress of his Family, and the Lamentations of his Friends, move him not one Jot: On he goes, insensible as a Brute, hastening to see his Ruin compleated. And then (if then perhaps) at the last he begins to Mourn, *when his Flesh and Body are consumed; and say, How have I hated Instruction and my Heart despised Reproof? and have not Obeyed the Voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine Ear to them that Instructed me? I was almost in all Evil in the midst of the Congregation and Assembly.* Emphatically true it is, that

Prov. v. 11, 12, 13. habitual Whoremongers and Adulterers do find themselves sooner or later, drawn into almost all Evil, almost all Kind of Wickedness and Mischief, and that in the publick View of the People, to their lasting Infamy; in particular, as it happened

in the Case of *David*; I believe more Mur-^{S E R M.}
ders have been committed on Account of ^{IV.}

such Criminal Engagements, than upon any one Occasion besides whatsoever. And therefore the Warning the wise Man gives us of the whorish Woman, is applicable in this Sense, as well as another that is worse than this; *Let not thine Heart decline to her Ways, go not astray in her Paths.* ^{Prov. vii. 25, 26, 27.}
For she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong Men have been slain by Her. Her House is the Way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of Death.

WHOSOEVER then would keep himself innocent of many, and great Transgressions, must never give up the Reins to this furious Passion, that will carry him headlong he knows not whither. But, although a Man cannot take Fire into his Bosom, and not be burnt (in some Measure;) yet possible it is for him, to shake the Fire out of his Bosom again, and so escape being consumed by it. And this is what every one should labour to do, that hath been unhappily entangled in this Snare; as soon as any Remorse smites him, (which at first he will go near to feel) he should

SERM.

IV.

exert all his Force to snap the fatal Bonds afunder, before the Habit is grown too strong to be master'd, and the Spirit of God is too much grieved to assist or redeem him from his Thralldom. To prevent which, he should break away all at once from the insidious Arms of the *strange Woman*, and renounce all farther Conversation and Acquaintance with her: He should retire from vain Company into himself, and cut off all the Avenues and Approaches towards the Sin, by which he had been once foiled; he should macerate his Body, and bring it under, by frequent Abstinencies and wholesome Austerities; he should endeavour to drive the unclean Spirit out of his Soul, by instant and fervent Prayer: Above all, he should humble himself in the Sight of God, by sorrowful Confessions, earnest Deprecations, and renewed Importunities for Pardon of his Sin past, and Grace to resist and subdue all such Temptations for the Time to come; in Cooperation with which, he should be sure to preserve such a sad Remembrance of his former Guilt, as may fill him constantly with a jealous Fear, and watchful

Care

Care over himself, and be an effectual S E R M.
Means of securing him against a fatal Re- IV.
lapse; and with these real Signs and Fruits
of Repentance, even such a Sinner may
reasonably hope to be admitted to Par-
don.

WE have indeed an exprefs Encourage-
ment for this Hope in the Example before
us. For when *David* (now melted into
Contrition) said unto *Nathan*, *I have sin-*
ned against the Lord: Nathan said unto *Da-*
vid (lest he should be quite overwhelm'd
with Grief and Despair) *The Lord also hath*
put away thy Sin, thou shalt not die.—

Not that it can be imagin'd, that so great
a Sin was forgiven upon cheap and easy
Terms, because we have here only a brief
Narrative of what pass'd on this Occasion.
No! we must in all Reason presume, that
the Depth of *David's* Humiliation was an-
swerable to the Heinousness of his Crime:
And we find elsewhere, that the finishing
his Repentance, cost him many Prayers and
Tears, and many grievous Pangs and Ter-
rors: Particularly in his penitential *Psalms*,
he pours forth himself in all the strong
Passions and Emotions of a contrite Soul,

SERM

IV.

almost sinking under a vast Load of Guilt, and yet seeking for Rest in the comfortable Hope of Forgiveness and Acceptance, upon his sincere Endeavours of Amendment. And together, with the bitter Remembrance of his Sin, he records his remarkable Recovery; the one, as a Warning to all such as may be in Danger of running into the same Temptation, the other as a Call to such as have been led into it, to spur them on to Repentance.

LET no Man then be so perverse as to imitate that part of *David's* Example, that ought to be avoided, and decline that which deserves to be imitated. If any Man hath been so unhappy, as to sin with *David*, for which his Example can be no Excuse; let him be so wise as to repent with *David*, to which his Example is a sufficient Encouragement. But then he must be sure to repent, as *David* did, as soon as the Minister of God's Word, or the faithful Monitor from within, stirs him up to it, without any Delay, with the same Demonstrations of Sincerity, with the same Tokens of a Dread and Abhorrence of the Crime, with the same Proof of it in his future

future Conduct, and the Innocency of his SERMON
Behaviour. So, and so only can he cherish IV.
any well grounded Hope of having his Sin
cover'd, and the Stain of it blotted out in
the Day of the *Lord Jesus*.

AND now for a Conclusion of the whole,
let us reflect once again, (as we have had
frequent Oecasion to do from the Incidents
in this Discourse let us reflect I say se-
riously) upon our own Impotence, and
humbly look up to God for Succour. For
Lord! what is Man! how capable of re-
belling against the Light of his own Mind?
What is Reason against Passion? What is
Flesh and Blood under Temptation? What
is Nature without Grace? What is Con-
science out of God's Keeping? Do Thou,
O Lord, vouchsafe to be our Guide and
our Keeper; Guide us where the Path is
plainest to be seen, and keep us from fall-
ing when we think we stand most securely.
Keep us more especially from the Deceit-
fulness of a corrupt Heart, that little World
of hidden Iniquity: And when we err and
go astray, and put ourselves out of thy Pro-
tection by our Sins and Follies, desert us
not O Lord! But recall and recover us, to
thy

SER M. thy self; when we fall into Temptation
IV. through wilful Blindness, do Thou restore
us, and give us Light and Strength to walk
in thy Ways; when we are lulling ourselves
asleep in carnal Security, do Thou awaken
our benumbed Senses; when we are har-
dening ourselves in stubborn Habits of Sin,
do Thou mollify our stony Hearts into
Repentance, by thy Divine Warnings, by
thy Judgments, by thy Terrors from with-
out, and from within; that so by any
Means we may be saved. Grant this, O
Lord, for the Sake of *Jesus Christ* our
Redeemer, and thy beloved Son, to whom
with thee O Father, and the Holy Ghost,
be all Honour and Glory, Might, Majesty
and Dominion, now and ever. *Amen.*





S E R M O N V.

Of the Sacrifice of a broken Spirit,
and contrite Heart.

PSALM li. 17.

*The Sacrifices of God are a broken
Spirit; a broken and Contrite
Heart, O God, wilt thou not de-
spise.*



THIS Psalm is David's Exer-
cise of penitential Humiliation,
after the Prophet Nathan had
happily surpris'd him into a
serious Sense, and thorough Conviction of
the

S E R M O N
V.

S E R M. the two crying Sins of Adultery and Murder; which he here sorrowfully expresses, most unfeignedly confessing his original Corruption, and his actual Guilt; submitting to God's Justice, but deprecating his Wrath; imploring his Pardon, and the renewing Graces of his Holy Spirit: And lastly, conscious of the Sincerity and Contrition of his Soul, earnestly suing for the Release of his Sin, and relying upon God's great Mercy for it; even though he knew it was such as the Law had provided no Attonement for.

FOR thus much I take to be clearly implied in the Text, as it stands connected with the Verse immediately foregoing, *Thou desirest not Sacrifice, else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt Offerings. The Sacrifices of God, are a broken Spirit; a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.* That is, I am sensible that my Sins are of that Sort and Degree, for the Expiation of which, no legal Sacrifice is appointed, nor will any be accepted. But instead of a Sacrifice, O Lord, I have an humble and a penitent Heart, which is more precious in thy Sight, than
the

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 93

the richest Hecatomb, and which (such is S E R M.
thy infinite Compassion) will always be gra- V.
ciously received, never rejected, even in a
Case, where no Sacrifice would be admitted.

THIS I conceive is the just Meaning of
the Words, and they offer to our Thoughts
three Things more especially, that will de-
serve to be considered.

I. First, THE Matter of the Sacrifice
here presented by *David, a broken Spirit,*
and a *Contrite Heart.*

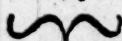
II. Secondly, THE Acceptableness of
that Sacrifice: *The Sacrifices of God, are a*
broken Spirit; that alone is more valuable
and available with him, than all other Ob-
lations.

III. Thirdly, THE comfortable Assu-
rance he appears to have had of such God's
gracious Acceptation. *A broken and a con-*
trite Heart, O God wilt not thou de-
spise. And,

I. THE first Thing to be considered,
is the Matter of the Sacrifice here pre-
sented by *David; a broken Spirit, and a*
contrite Heart.

SERM.

V.



Ezek.

xxxvi. 26.

Now these are *metaphorical* Expressions, standing in direct Opposition to what the Scripture (by the same kind of Figure) calls a *hard* or *stony Heart*. For as a Stone, or some other hard Body is not to be broken by the Force of a tender Hand, perhaps not easily by the Stroke of a Hammer; so is an obstinate and inflexible Temper of Mind: It will not yield to the gentle Impressions of God's good Spirit, it is not to be mollified by the Divine Promises, hardly indeed to be subdued by the severest temporal Judgments; or the yet severer Menaces of eternal Damnation.

ON the contrary, suppose the same hard Body be reduced to Powder, as it may, by some Engine or Instrument of superior Force to it, that once done, it is no longer capable of Resistance; it becomes soft to the Touch, and liable to every little Impression, and may with abundance of Ease be divided, one Particle from another. And just thus it is, with the *broken* and *contrite*, that is to say, the true penitent Heart, humbled by God's Word, which in its spiritual Energy (as the Prophet compareth it) *Is like the Hammer that breaks the Rock*

Jer. xxiii.
29.

in

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 95

in Pieces; and the Rock once broken; be-^{S E R M.}
comes as yielding as the Sand; the Heart^{V.}
of Stone is turned into a Heart of Flesh;
that which was before perfectly insensible,
is touch'd with a very quick and lively, a
pungent, and painful Sense of its Sins:
That which was before so inflexibly stub-
born, is now obsequious to comply with
the silent but powerful Motions of God's
converting Grace, and ready from hence
forward, to obey the Heavenly Dictates of
his Will.

AND 'tis a Heart thus affected and dis-
posed, that *David* here offers up in Sacri-
fice to his God. And that his Example
may be the more useful, and instructive to
us; I shall now proceed to enquire where-
in that Contrition of Heart (stript of Me-
taphor) does truly consist, of which he
makes his humble Offering.

AND not to perplex a serious Matter that
so infinitely concerns us, too much with
artificial Notions; true Contrition (as I
apprehend it) must consist in a deep and
unfeigned Sense of our Sins, mingled with
all that Fear, Grief and Hatred, which
they justly deserve, and attended with a
thorough

S E R M. thorough Change both in the Will and Affections, and a firm Purpose of Amendment of Life.

V.

I KNOW indeed the *Schoolmen* make Contrition to be but one part of the complex Act of Repentance, and strictly speaking, it is no more: But in the Latitude I now take it, it comprises all the necessary Preparations to Repentance, and all the genuine Effects of it, the whole Duty and Exercise of a sincere Penitent.

AND I have sufficient Warrant for taking it in this Latitude; because 'tis usual in the Scripture itself, by a familiar *Synecdoche*, to put Contrition, Confession, sometimes one Branch of Repentance, sometimes another, for the entire Duty. And 'tis agreeable so to understand the Contrition in my Text, because the *Psalmist* represents it to God in so confiding a Manner, as being that which he could by no Means reject, and we may be sure that nothing less than a compleat Repentance, can be entitled to his Acceptance. But to proceed to a distinct Consideration of it, in its several Parts, and gradual Advances, I must

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 97

I must resume the Account already given S E R M.
of it, and say again. V.

I. THAT true Contrition consists in a deep and unfeigned Sense of our Sins. And this must necessarily be the Ground-work of all the rest, because 'tis impossible indeed to torment ourselves with Fear and Sorrow, without something either in Reality or Imagination that should be the Cause of it: 'Tis impossible to conceive a strange Hatred and Aversion against a Thing, we are not so much as sensible of, or to flee from that we have no Apprehensions of. Where there is no Sense of Sin therefore, there can be no Contrition for it. And accordingly the *Pharisee* we find, who trusted in himself that he was righteous, was too stout, even whilst he was praying to God, to confess any Guilt of his own; for he was conscious, it seems, of none, though at the same Time he was inwardly full of Rottenness and Hypocrisy. And such Insensibility is the certain Sign of a hypocritical, nay of a hardened and impenitent Heart. And it can proceed from nothing but a gross affected Ignorance, or a wretched Inconsideration, or

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H

perhaps

SERMON perhaps a long habitual Continuance in
 V. Sin, that has quite extinguished the No-
 tions of Vice and Virtue, and buried them
 deep in oblivion, and rendred the Consci-
 ence callous and past feeling. That Con-
 trition therefore, which is the opposite to this
 Hardness and Insensibility, must suppose the
 Sinner in the first Place to be very feelingly
 affected with a Sense of his Sins, to have
 his Conscience both enlightned and awake-
 ned by the Word of God, to be convinced
 from thence of the Irregularity of his
 Ways, and Contrariety of all his wicked
 Works to the Authority of God's Laws,
 and the Holiness of his Name, to labour
 under the Load of his Guilt, and in the
 Conscioufness of his own ill Deservings, to
 be ready to sink under the very great Num-
 ber and Weight of his Transgressions.

SUCH were the Sentiments of *David's*
 Heart, and suitable (as 'tis Natural it
 should) was the Confession of his Tongue,
 when he presumed to approach God's
 Mercy's Seat with his penitential Sacrifice.
Behold, says he in this Psalm, I was sha-
pen in Iniquity and in Sin did my Mother
conceive me. And again; I acknowledge my
Transgres-

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 99

Transgressions, and my Sin is ever before S E R M.
me. And in another Place; Mine Iniquities V.
are gone over my Head, as a heavy Bur- Pf. xxxviii.
then they are too heavy for me. And to 4.

the like Purpose in many other Places:
So that from his Practice, as well as Reason
of the Thing, we may conclude, that true
Contrition consists in, and is founded upon a
deep and unfeigned Sense of our Sins. But,

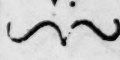
2. It is such a Sense as is accompanied
with just and terrible Apprehensions of
Fear; for when the Sinner already con-
vict in his own Conscience, begins to re-
flect, (as a guilty Conscience will force
him to do) upon his past Life, and at the
same Time looks up towards Heaven, the
Throne of God's dread Majesty, and for-
ward towards Eternity, upon the Brink
of which he stands daily shivering, (the
Lord in his Mercy spare us) what a fright-
ful Scene must this be, to a Man who has
been long blind perhaps, and whose Eyes
are but just opened, as it were, to see this
startling Spectacle! And behold, behind
him a formidable Troop of Sins; Sins as
red as Crimson, and as numberless as the

SERM. Sands upon the Sea Shore! above him the
 V. holy and just God, his Creator and his
 Judge, ready to come with Vengeance!
 before him, the bottomless Pit of Hell
 gaping wide to receive him, and swallow
 him up in Perdition!

DOUBTLESS the *Terrour of the Lord*, when thus set in Array against a self condemned Sinner, must needs terrify and dismay him, especially if he considers, and allows a due Weight to the Consideration, That *God is greater than his Heart, and knoweth all Things*; and that nothing, unless he *works out his Salvation with Fear and Trembling* now, will be able to rescue him hereafter out of the Hand of an Omnipotent Avenger.

AND this very Fear of divine Vengeance, is certainly a very proper Ingredient in true Contrition; for to this End were God's Threatnings denounced against impenitent Sinners, that they might be frightened out of their Sins; and this Fear, when once duly impressed upon their Minds, affords them the more abundant Conviction of the baneful Nature, and pernicious
 Confe-

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 101

Consequences of their Sins; it has the best, S E R M.
the wholesomest Effect of the natural Pas- V.
sion of Fear, in warning them aloud to 
flee from the Wrath to come, and it sets on
Work the other Passions, which are wont
to dwell in a *contrite Heart*, in order to
hasten and complete it's Repentance in
good Time.

3. THE aforesaid grievous Sense of
Sin, and the fearful Apprehension of that
Vengeance which is it's due, will necessa-
rily draw after them a bitter Remorse
and most piercing Sorrow. For it must
needs gall the Sinner to the Soul, and be a
present and unintermitting Torment unto
him, to consider, that he should be so
foolish and perverse in all his Ways, so
base and unworthy, so head-strong and
ungovernable, so much an Enemy to him-
self, as well as a Rebel to his God; that
he should tarnish the Beauty of his im-
mortal Soul, and render it odious even in
the Sight of his compassionate Redeemer;
that he should forfeit the Favour of his
best Friend and Benefactor, and wilfully
and spitefully provoke him to Anger; that

SERM. he should involve himself in so much Trouble and Perplexity, and expose himself to so much Inconvenience and Danger; that he should trespass so far upon infinite Goodness, and dally so long with infinite Justice; in a Word, that he should mispend the precious Talent of Time, and abuse all his noble Faculties, to the great Dishonour of the Donor, and at his own utmost Peril; that he should misplace his Love upon the most hateful Object in the whole World, and that he should be all along so busy and industrious in doing that, which he must undo again with all his Might; or else he fears, nay he knows, he must be ruined to all Eternity.

Heb. iv.
12.

THESE and such grating Thoughts as these, which an alarm'd Conscience must be sure to suggest, must needs pierce (like the *Word of God*, that gives them both their Edge and Point) *even to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow*; and as they force their Entrance into these very sensible Parts, the Smart and Anguish of them must be insufferably great; Enough no doubt to constrain

constrain the sorrowful Penitent to lift up SERM. V.
his Eyes in the midst of this his Torment, Job. vii. 20.
and to cry out with holy Job in the Bit-
terness of his Soul, *I have sinned, what*
shall I do unto Thee, O thou Preserver of
Men? Why hast Thou set me as a Mark a-
gainst Thee, so that I am a Burthen to my
self? Alas, the Arrows of the Almighty are
within me, the Poyson of them drinketh up
my Spirit. O let these furious Rebukes,
these racking Lashes of my own enraged
Conscience suffice; and let me not finally be
delivered to the everlasting Tormentors. Job. vi. 4.

THIS bitter Remorse and Compunction
therefore (which is the same with Con-
trition, strictly taken for one part of Re-
pentance) is most certainly a principal In-
gredient in it, when it is put for the whole
Complexion of Passions and Actions, which
are requisite to perfect our Repentance. But,

4. SUCH a terrible Idea, and such a
painful Sense of the Guilt and Misery of
Sin, will, if it is suffered to have its proper
Operation, beget an utter Hatred and Ab-
horrence of it. For 'tis unnatural to love
or desire Evil as Evil; if it would gain up-
on our Affections, it must insinuate itself

S E R M. under some other more tempting Appearance. But to the Soul that labours under such Convictions and Apprehensions, and such exquisite Pain and Grief, as I have been hitherto describing, Sin is stripped naked of all Disguise; it is represented as loathsome and deformed in itself, as bearing at present a Burden of Affliction, more than the Sinner can well support himself under, and as tending at last to endless Death and Destruction. And these sure are no amiable Features; nor is it possible almost for the Sinner to deceive himself in thinking so. The uneasy Pangs which he feels within his own Breast, and the Fears with which he is so grievously haunted; must, if he be not strangely wanting to himself, determine his Thoughts and Inclinations quite otherwise. He can hardly find in his Heart to hug and harbour the filthy Viper any longer: He will rather conceive a perfect Loathing and Detestation of it, as the Bane of his Soul, the Nuisance of his Life, the Enemy of his Peace; and the sole Cause and Author of all Danger and all Mischief to him. And the Love and Liking to Sin being thus rooted out
of

of his Heart, he will of Course discern SERM.
and become enamour'd of the Beauties of V.
Virtue; he will presently be satisfied of the
Reasonableness and Equity of his Duty;
he will be excited to admire and adore all
God's Perfections, especially the inexhaustible
Riches of his gracious Love, in healing
the Broken-hearted, tendring Pardon to
their Sins upon their sincere Repentance,
and blotting out their Iniquities for ever.

AND now his Affections being so well
disposed; and fearing, bewailing, and abhorring,
what he once fondly pursued, loved, and
delighted in, he wants but one Qualification
more of an humble and contrite Heart; and that is,

5. A THOROUGH Change of the Will,
and a firm Purpose of Amendment of Life;
and this is a Determination that the Will
must almost naturally take after so good a
Preparation towards it: For since the Sinner
is already supposed to be convinced, that Sin
is of all Things the most irregular and unreasonable,
the most lamentable in its present Effects,
and the most dreadful in its future Consequences,
and every Way hateful and detestable; he cannot embrace
it

SERM. it in his Practice, without interfering with
 V. his best directed Passions, as well as offering Violence to his best instructed Reason; he cannot do it without preposterously approving that in his Choice, that can obtain no Approbation from his Judgment, no Place in his Affections; so that he must act plain Contradictions, and make the same Thing at the same Time, and in the same Respect the Object of his Fear and his Hope, his Grief and his Joy, his Hatred and his Love.

AND therefore consequently, unless we could reconcile these Absurdities, we must suppose the Will to stand ready disposed, utterly to disclaim, renounce, forsake, or avoid, what we cannot at the same Time in Reason but condemn, and if we consult Passion, we must dread, lament, and detest.

AND for this Reason, the Fear, and Sorrow, and Detestation which arise from a Sense of Sin in the true Contrition of the Heart, will produce, and do require a total Change of the Will, and a firm Purpose of Amendment of Life, and a sincere Endeavour to eschew Evil, and cleave to
 that

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 107

that which is good, and persevere in it to the End. SERM. V.

AND thus I have passed through the several Stages, and given you a Description of the several Parts of that Contrition, which, when it is compleat, consists as I have made it out, in a deep and unfeigned Sense of our Sins, mingled with all that Fear, Grief, and Hatred, which they justly deserve, and attended moreover with a thorough Change in the Will, and a firm Purpose of Amendment of Life, and that Purpose, as long as Life shall last, effectually put in Execution.

AND there appears to be a close and necessary Coherence between all the several Parts; for in the first Place, a conscious Sense of Sin must of Necessity be presupposed; because what a Man is not sensible of, he cannot be concerned about; and therefore Conviction must be the Foundation of Contrition,

AND he that is once made truly sensible of the Nature and Guilt of his Sins, will and must be full of fearful Apprehensions, in Regard of the Justice and Holiness, the infinite Knowledge and Power, and

SERM. and Majesty of that God, against whom
 V. they were committed. And he that is so
 justly and thoroughly apprehensive of the
 ill Consequences of his Will, ought, if he
 pursues it, to be heavily concerned, and
 heartily bewail his own Folly, that he
 should act so unreasonably, so basely, and
 unworthily, provoking, the best of Friends,
 and creating to himself a most terrible E-
 nemy.

AND a Spirit wounded with this inward
 Grief, will, and ought to conceive a just
 Hatred and Abhorrence of the accursed
 Cause of all his Fears, and all his Sorrows;
 and this Hatred and Abhorrence of Sin
 will, and must produce a perfect Aliena-
 tion of the Will from it, and a total Re-
 nuntiation of it, and a stedfast Resolution
 by God's Grace to lead a new Life, and
 to continue constant and faithful unto
 Death.

So that the *contrite* Soul, from his first
 Entrance into his penitential Course, is led
 as it were Step by Step, and recovers him-
 self by Degrees, till at length he arrives
 to a perfect State of Repentance, not to be
 repented of, and gives such Proofs of the
 Sincerity

Sincerity and Integrity of his Contrition, as S E R M.
God will not despise. V.

AND thus I have spoken largely to the first Thing offered to our Consideration here in the Text; *viz.* the Matter of *David's Sacrifice, a broken Spirit, and a contrite Heart.*

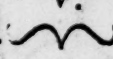
I HAVE not Time left at present sufficient, to shew the Acceptableness of this Sacrifice, and the Grounds of the Penitent's Assurance concerning God's gracious Acceptation of it; and therefore reserving this for the next Opportunity, I shall conclude now with a practical Inference or two. And

First, IT may be gathered from what has been said, how unprofitable a Bargain, how very wretched a Purchase Sin is; for if Men habituate themselves to it, and continue impenitent in it, the best that can be said of it is, that it may be a seeming Sweet: But 'tis a certain deadly Poyson; and the more it is indulged, the surer still it works; it makes their Wills stubborn, and their Hearts hard; it deprives them of their very Sense and Feeling, and in this *letbargical* Estate it carries them insensibly

SERM. bly into Hell, where they are awaken'd at
 V. last by the *never dying Worm*, and find
 themselves again in the midst of endless
 and insupportable Torments. These are
 the sad Wages of the impenitent Sinner;
 with all his sinful Profit and Pleasure he
 loses his own Soul to all Eternity.

AND even those that do break off their
 Sins, by a timely Repentance, and make
 God the humble Offering of a *contrite*
Heart, even they, I say, when they once
 set about the necessary Work, are too sen-
 sibly convinced, that the Enjoyments of
 Sin, however pleasing to a vitious Palate,
 are very *Bitterness in the Belly*, and the *Gall*
of Asps within the Bowels. They find and
 feel, that the Preparations to Repentance
 are very irksome and unpleasant, and the
 Pangs of a new Birth extremely painful;
 those griping Twitches of Conscience,
 those perplexing Doubts, those amazing
 Fears, those Heart-breaking Sorrows, and
 all that Loathing and Horrour, which
 is created by the Ugliness of Sin, when
 stripp'd of its flattering Disguises; these
 they perceive to be the Fruits of their own

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 111

wicked and wilful Folly. And yet glad to S E R M.
compound an unequal Bargain at any Rate, V.
they contentedly submit to the Severity of 
the Discipline. And their very *sorrowing* 2 Cor. vii.
after a Godly Sort (to use the Apostle's 11.
Expressions) what Carefulness doth it work
in them, yea what clearing of themselves,
yea what Indignation, yea what Fear, yea
what a vehement Desire, yea what Zeal,
yea what Revenge? That so by any Means
they may be reconciled to their God, and
flee from his Wrath, to the Arms of his
Mercy. Since therefore, the just Reward
of Sin unrepented of, is Death eternal;
and since Repentance itself is so severe a
Punishment, let us not court and hug our
certain Ruine, nor let us be fond and co-
vetous of that Vanity and Emptiness, which
when we come off cheapest, we must be
forced to pay so exceeding dear for.

Secondly, WE must learn from the fore-
going Discourse, how wonderful good and
gracious God is to us, his sinful Creatures,
how excessively careful and tender of us,
lest we should miscarry. For he has in
no wise left us without a Monitor of his
own

SERM. own just Anger against our Sins, and the

V. Danger of our impenitent Continuance.

The very Conscience which is placed in every Man's Breast, is a perpetual Remembrancer to us, if we will but listen to it; our Reason, if we would but abide by its most impartial Sentence, is Judge between God and us, and gives it still against us; the Misgivings of our own Hearts, if we do not take Pains to stifle them, are frequently alarming us; and lastly, the Workings of natural Passions, when placed upon their own proper Objects, are continually urging us to make Haste, and flee from the Wrath to come.

In short, the great Lesson of Repentance is not hidden from us, neither is it afar off: It is not in Heaven that we should say, Who shall go up to Heaven for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the Sea, that we should say, Who shall go over the Sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it: But it is nigh unto us, in our Mouths, and in our Hearts, that we may do it. For God has plainly *set Life and Death*

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 113

Death, Good and Evil before us: He has S E R M.
most graciously and earnestly invited us to V.
the one; and taken all possible Care to warn
us of, and deter us from the other: He
has framed our very Nature so, that our
own Hearts are our very first Accusers
when we do Evil, and the inward Sense of
our Souls gives us early and repeated No-
tices of that Danger and Misery, to which
we stand exposed; and at the same Time,
points us to the only salutary Remedy;
and prompts us to apply it in due Sea-
son.

If therefore still *seeing we will not see,*
and *hearing we will not hear, nor under-*
stand, lest we should be converted and heal'd;
God may justly call Heaven and Earth,
hay and our own Reason and Conscience,
and even, natural Instinct and Passion to
witness against us; at the last Day, that we
have rejected his good Counsel against our
selves, that we have *wronged our own*
Souls, that we have most unnaturally *ha-*
ted him, and loved Death. And that Prov. viii.
Damnation is in Effect the Portion that 36.
we have chosen to inherit. From which

SERM. wretched Choice, God's restraining and
V. preventing Grace preserve us All, through
the Merits of *Jesus Christ*, by the Aids and
Comforts of the Holy Ghost; to which
ever blessed and undivided Trinity, be all
Honour and Praise, Might, Majesty and
Dominion, this Day, henceforth, and for
ever. *Amen.*

Now to God the Father, &c.



SERMON

sider
I.



SERMON VI.

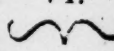
Of the Sacrifice of a broken Spirit,
and contrite Heart.



PSALM li. 17.

*The Sacrifices of God are a broken
Spirit; a broken and contrite
Heart, O God, wilt thou not de-
spise.*



IN these Words, as I have already SERM.
explained them to you, there are VI.
three Things you may remember, 
that offer themselves to our Con-
sideration.

I. THE Matter of the *Sacrifices* here
presented

SERM. presented by *David; a broken Spirit, and*
 VI. *a contrite Heart.*

II. THE Acceptableness of that *Sacrifice: The Sacrifices of God, are a broken Spirit; that alone, it seems, is more valuable, and more available with him, than all other Oblations.*

III. THE comfortable Assurance, the Penitent appears to have had of such God's gracious Acceptation, expressed in the latter Clause: *A broken and a contrite Heart, O God, wilt thou not despise.*

IN speaking to the first Particular, the Matter (*i. e.*) of *David's Sacrifice, a broken Spirit, and a contrite Heart; I first shew'd you the Ground and Reason of the Metaphor, which seems to be taken from a Stone, or some other Body, which when whole and entire, resists the Force of a tender Hand, and, perhaps, even the Stroke of the Hammer: But if it be once reduced into Powder, by some Engine more forcible, and of stronger Consistence than itself, then it becomes soft and pliable to the Touch; and subject to every the least Impression, and may with much Ease be separated, one Particle from another.*

AND

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. I 17

AND just thus it is with a *broken and a* SERM. VI.
contrite Heart; which, whilst it was in a State of Impenitence, was stubborn and inflexible; but when once it is subdued by the Energy of God's Word and Spirit, (which is *like the Hammer, that breaketh the Rock in Pieces*; as the Prophet *Jeremy* Jer. xxiii. 29. compareth it) then is it very sensible and flexible; It is inwardly touch'd with a very feeling and painful Sense of Sin, and ready to comply with the gentle Motions of God's quickning and converting Grace.

HAVING thus accounted for the Meaning of these *metaphorical* Expressions; I proceeded to consider, wherein that Contrition of Heart (stript of *Metaphor*) does truly consist, of which *David* here makes his humble Offering. And true Contrition as comprising all the necessary Preparations for Repentance, and all the genuine Effects of it, (in which Latitude I now understand it) must consist in a deep and unfeigned Sense of our Sins, mingled with all that Fear, Sorrow, Hatred and Aversion which they justly deserve, and attended moreover, with a thorough Change

SERM. both in the Will and Affections, and a firm
VI. Purpose of Amendment of Life.

AND in explaining the several Parts of this complex Act, and the natural Connexion that there is between them; I have shewn in the first Place, that a conscious Sense of Sin must of Necessity be presupposed, &c.

II. I PASS on to the second Particular to be consider'd in my Text, namely, the Acceptableness of that Sacrifice which David offered: *The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit*; that alone, it seems, is more valuable, more available in his Sight, than all other Oblations.

AND the Truth of this Observation is founded upon the Verse immediately preceding the Text. *For thou desirest not Sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt Offerings.* And in Opposition to Them, it is subjoin'd; *the Sacrifices of God, are a broken Spirit; Sacrifices*, that is, such as he does desire, and delight in. And the very Opposition proves the Acceptableness of such penitential *Sacrifices*.

For

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 119

For when two Things are brought into SERM.
Competition together, and one is rejected VI.
upon the Comparifon, the other muft in
Courfe be fupposed to be accepted.

AND from the Nature and Reason of the Thing it will appear, that Humility and Contrition of Soul, muft needs be more acceptable to God, than any Kind of legal *Sacrifice*. For tho' the legal *Sacrifices* were Rites appointed by God himfelf, for the Expiation of the People's Sins, and the reftoring them to the Privileges of his Covenant; yet it is not to be imagined, that they fhould work this effect by any inherent Virtue of their own: For it *is not poffible* indeed, (as the Apostle to the Hebrews affures us, Chap. x.) *That the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, fhould take away Sins*; nor can it be precious, or well pleafing in God's Sight, for its own fake; for Sin is the Defilement of the Soul, an inward impurity, that no outward purgation can ever reach or cleanfe; and God is a holy and immaculate Spirit, whom the Steam, of Blood, or Fat, or Odours of the sweeteft Smell, cannot in the leaft affect.

SERM.

VI.

AND in Truth, one great end of the Institution of *Sacrifices*, was to beget in the Sinner an humble Sense of his Sins, and a reverential Love of God. That whilst he was permitted to offer the Life of a Beast, in Lieu of his own, he might be duly convinced, what he himself had justly deserved, and how good and gracious God was, to appoint, and accept of such a Substitution. Which yet he will not accept neither, any farther forth than the *Sacrifice* is accompanied with that Humiliation and Repentance, of which it ought to be the Token and the Testimony. This is clearly and fully enough expressed in the first Chapter of *Isaiah*. Where the Prophet expostulates in the Name of God, and says, Ver. xi. &c. *To what purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices, unto me? I delight not in the Blood of Bulls, of Lambs, or of He-Goats. Bring no more vain Oblations: Incense is an Abomination unto me: I cannot away with it: It is Iniquity, even your solemn Meetings. When ye spread forth your Hands, I will hide mine Eyes from you; yea, when ye make many Prayers I will not hear. And why? the Reason is signified in few*

Words;

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 121

Words; your Hands are full of Blood. SERM.

They had the Guilt it seems of innocent VI.

Blood upon them, not yet repented of;

and that alone was a Barr to the Acceptance of all their Oblations and their Prayers.

But they are taught how to remove it, in the next Words, Ver. 16. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your doings from before mine Eyes: Cease to do Evil, Learn to do well, &c.*

AND what will the Consequence be? Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Repentance and Amendment of Life: These are the only reasonable Terms of Reconciliation betwixt God and his People. And upon these Terms therefore he makes a most gracious Promise; *tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, yet they shall be as white as Snow; tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool.* And in the Result, I think, it appears, That 'tis Truth in the inward Parts, which God principally desires, and a real Change in the Mind, and Will, and Affections which he chiefly respects. Without the spiritual Oblation of *a broken and a contrite Heart*, all the legal Sacrifices are of no avail; and 'tis in
no

SERM. no other Regard, but only as they betoken
 VI. or proceed from true Contrition, that they
 are at any Time accepted.

BUT on the contrary, such is the Price and Esteem of this Contrition, where it is real or hearty, that it will sufficiently recommend itself to God, even without the Intervention of a Sacrifice, nay even in a Case, for the Expiation of which there was no Provision in the Law, nor would any Sacrifice be admitted.

SUCH was the Case of *David* in the Text, a Complication of Adultery and Murder, two wilful presumptuous Sins, for which, there was no manner of legal Attonement. This he was plainly sensible of, and scruples not to make it Part of his Acknowledgment, though he knew in the Eye of the Law, it was the highest Aggravation of his Guilt. But he entertains no Doubt of a favourable Acceptance notwithstanding. *The Sacrifices of God*, he persuades himself, *are a broken Spirit*, preferable to all other *Sacrifices* besides; and such as a merciful God would in no wise reject; and he appears indeed, which is the third Particular in the Text,

III. To

III. To have had a very comfortable Assurance of God's most gracious Acceptance, exprest pretty confidently in that latter Clause; *a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, wilt thou not despise.* And what were the Grounds of this his Assurance, will be very well worth our Enquiry. And the Question will naturally branch itself into these three Specialties.

1. *First*, WHETHER he had Ground sufficient from the Light of Nature to build this Confidence upon. Or,

2. *Secondly*, FROM the Law of *Moses*. Or,

3. *Thirdly*, WHETHER it was owing to some farther Revelation.

I. THE first Question is, whether he had Ground sufficient from the Light of Nature to build this Confidence upon. By the Light of Nature, I understand at present, the Result of such obvious Notions concerning God's Goodness and Forbearance, his Mercy and Compassion, &c. as will naturally (as it were) spring up in a reasonable Mind, that sets itself seriously to think upon such Matters.

AND I conceive any Man might from
his

SERM. his own Reason collect, that to a gracious
 VI. and merciful God, Contrition without a
 Sacrifice, must needs be more acceptable,
 than a Sacrifice without Contrition. The
Heathens themselves had not such disho-
 nourable Thoughts of the Deity but they
 could discern so much. *Seneca* will tell us,
 ' That the Honour of the Gods, consists
 ' not so much in the stately Victims, as
 ' in the pious and well disposed Mind of the
 ' Worshipper: That the good Man may be
 religious with a handful of Meal, or a lit-
 tle Pulse; but that he that is of an evil
 Mind will not be so, though he should
 offer whole *Hecatombs*. And even one
 of their Poets in a sort of religious Rapture
 cries out:

* *Compositum jus fasque Animo; sanctosque recessus
 Mentis, & incoctum generoso Pectus honesto;
 Hæc cedo, ut admoveam Templis, & farre litabo.*

A Mind, says he, framed and fitted for the
 entire Observance of the Laws of God
 and Man, adorned within, with Inno-

* *Perf. Sat. 2. l. 73, &c.*

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 125

cence, and Purity of Thought, and seasoned with the generous Principles of native Honesty; with such a Mind as this, let me present myself to the Altar; and a little Bread-corn, I doubt not, shall suffice for my Atonement.

SERM.
VI.
~~~~~

And indeed so far there is an Appearance of Truth and right Reasoning in what they say. For if you make a Comparison between the two; doubtless a good Disposition and Intention, and Sincerity of Heart in him that *sacrificeth*, or performeth any other Rite of religious Worship, is of more Value in God's Sight, than all the most costly *Sacrifices* would be, without such Qualifications.

BUT then does this fully satisfy the Question proposed? Does it amount to a positive Proof, that the Sinner upon his hearty and unfeigned Repentance, shall find Acceptance and Pardon at God's Hand? I am afraid (to borrow the Prophet's Allusion) *the Bed is shorter than that a Man can stretch himself upon it, and the Covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.* Isa. xxviii.  
20.

FOR tho' the Contemplation of God's infinite

SER M. finite Goodness and Compassion, might  
 VI. make us apt to conclude in Favour of the  
 sincere Penitent; yet if we consider withal,  
 that he is equally wise, and holy, and just,  
 that will shake the Conclusion again, and  
 render all such Hopes very wavering and  
 uncertain.

FOR 'tis as natural for a Being, that is  
 infinitely holy, and wise, and just, to hate  
 Sin, and to punish it, as it is for a Being  
 infinitely good and merciful to pardon it  
 upon Repentance. And Repentance, tho'  
 it implies a Change of Mind with Respect  
 to what is past, and a Change of Manners  
 for the Time to come, yet it cannot pass  
 for a sufficient Reparation to God's injured  
 Honour, or Satisfaction to his offended  
 Justice, for the many actual Violations of  
 his righteous Law, which the repenting  
 Sinner may formerly have been guilty of.  
 And consequently this alone can never ease  
 the penitent Soul of that solicitous Care and  
 Fear, and anxious Doubt, which the Sense  
 of Guilt must needs create, which whether  
 it will be forgiven or no, he cannot cer-  
 tainly tell: And in this sad Perplexity he  
 is like to continue: For the Light of Na-  
 ture

ture is not clear enough to guide him SERM.  
through the Intricacy. Reason may please VI.  
itself in thinking, that 'tis agreeable to the  
Notion of infinite Mercy, to forgive Sin  
upon true Repentance. But Reason cannot  
so well reconcile it, with the Notion of in-  
finite Holiness and Justice, to forgive Sin,  
without any Manner of Satisfaction. Here  
therefore Reason is perfectly at a Loss, and  
finds itself unable to resolve the Difficulty.  
To the first Question then, I can answer  
no otherwise, than in the Negative, *viz.*  
That there is not Ground enough from the  
Light of Nature to build so much Assu-  
rance upon. *David* must have some bet-  
ter Foundation, when he address'd himself  
to God in so confiding a Manner, *a broken  
and a contrite Heart, O God, wilt thou not  
despise.*

*Secondly,* THE next Question is, whether  
he could find wherewith to support this  
Confidence in the Law of *Moses*.

Now the Tenor of this Law is such,  
that nothing less (in Strictness of Speak-  
ing) than a perfect and unfinning Obe-  
dience could deliver its Subjects, from the  
Effect of that Curse, which was annexed



SERM. to it, as its Sanction. For it is written

VI. (as St. Paul himself quotes it) *cursed is he*  
 Gal. iii. 10. *that continueth not in all the Things which*  
*were written in the Book of the Law to do*  
*them.*

'Tis true, there was a legal Provision made for the Expiation of some of the lesser Sins of Ignorance and Infirmary: For Numb. xv. 7, 28. *so it is expressly said, If any Soul sin thro*  
*Ignorance, then he shall bring a She-Goat*  
*of the first Year for a Sin Offering; and*  
*the Priest shall make an Attonement for the*  
*Soul that sinneth ignorantly, &c. And it*  
*shall be forgiven him.*

BUT the greater Sins of Presumption; were under the irrevocable Sentence of utter Excision; for so it follows, ver. 30, 31. *But the Soul that doth ought presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord; that Soul shall be cut off from among his People, and his Iniquity shall be upon him.*

'Tis evident therefore, that the Mosaic Law was a Ministration of Condemnation to all wilful and presumptuous Sinners, that left them (ordinarily speaking) under the Terror of a severe Sentence, without any Room to hope for a Mitigation.

OR

OR if there were any Reason for such S E R M.  
Hope, it is not to be fetched from the VI.  
Letter of the Law, but it is obscurely  
couch'd under Types and Figures, which  
were the Shadows of good Things to come,  
the Substance of which was not discerni-  
ble at that Time, but to the piercing Eye  
of Faith.

IN short 'tis impossible, that *David*  
should find any Thing in the Tenor of  
*Moses's* Law, or the Terms of God's Cove-  
nant with the People of *Israel*, that could  
countenance such a Degree of Assurance.  
Nay, if he had listened to the threatening  
Voice of the Law, without looking any  
farther, he might have been tempted un-  
der his heavy Load of unexpiated Guilt, to  
sit down in sullen Despair, since he knew  
full well, and had own'd it just before,  
that his Sin was of that deep Die, that no  
expiatory Sacrifice that the Law had pro-  
vided, could possibly take out the Stain of  
it. It remains therefore,

*Thirdly*, THAT it must be owing to  
some further and clearer Revelation, that  
*David* in the very Depth of his Contrition,  
was enabled to raise himself up to this Pitch

SERM of Confidence, and say; *A broken and a*  
 VI. *contrite Heart, O God, wilt not thou de-*  
*spise.*

AND though there was nothing in the Body of the Law, nor in the naked Letter that could be sufficient to bear him up in it, yet there were symbolical Allusions, and typical References, some more, some less obscure; which were even in those Days both an Exercise, and a Help to their Faith, who rejoiced (with *Abraham*) to see *the Day of Christ*, and no Doubt were refreshed and comforted with the Sight of it, though through a Veil, and afar off.

AND perhaps the very Deficiency of the Law itself, in not providing, nor allowing any Expiation for the more notorious and wilful Transgressions, was one Means of putting the People upon a narrower Search and urging them to look out for the only salutary Remedy, with the greater Care and Solitude.

AND that this might not prove a fruitless Enquiry, and so hurry them into utter Despair, and (as a Consequence of that) total Neglect of their Duty; God was pleased to superadd to the Law, some ex-

*a broken Spirit and contrite Heart.* 131

dinary Significations of Grace and Mercy, SERM.  
not directly included in it; and these he VI.  
took Care to make farther known by his  
Prophets, as preparatory to the blessed Go-  
spel, in which alone the Doctrine of Re-  
mission of Sins upon Repentance is expli-  
cately taught, and distinctly set forth, and  
comfortably applied to the Heart and Con-  
science of the Believer.

AND *David* himself being a Prophet,  
was doubtless initiated in this Faith, and  
by Inspiration first assured of God's gra-  
cious Acceptance, and Pardon upon his  
heartly Contrition, and then instructed to  
commit it to Writing, for the Use, and  
Direction, and Consolation of others.

AND this he seems to take voluntarily  
upon himself, when he is earnestly suing  
for his Release, *Restore unto me* (says he) Ver. 12,  
*the Joy of thy Salvation: And uphold me* and 13.  
*with thy free Spirit, then will I teach*  
*Transgressors thy Ways, and Sinners shall be*  
*converted unto Thee.* That is, when I am  
able to assure them from my own Expe-  
rience, that there is Mercy with thee, more  
and greater to the truly Penitent; than the  
Law has any where covenanted for.

K 2

AND



SERM.

VI.

Isa. i. 16,  
18.

AND the Rest of the Prophets are most of them in the same Strain; *Wash ye, and make ye clean*, says *Isaiab*, and then your *Sins, though as red as Scarlet, shall be as white as Snow*. Nay the Prophet *Jeremy* proposes by way of Covenant. *After those Days, this is the Covenant that I will make with them saith the Lord. I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and will write it in their Hearts. I will forgive their Iniquity, and their Sin will I remember no more.*

Ezek. xviii.  
30.

AND so likewise, *Ezekiel*, *Repent and turn your selves from all your Transgressions, and so Iniquity shall not be your Ruine. Make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit, for why will ye die, O House of Israel.*

To the same Purpose is that of *Joel*, *Rent your Heart, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: For he is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Goodness, and repenteth him of the Evil.*

ALL which Passages, and many more that might be recited, are in Truth in their Temper and Spirit properly Evangelical: They are (to use *St. Peter's* Resemblance)

*a broken Spirit and contrite Heart.* I 33

as a *Light that shineth in a dark Place,* SERM. VI.  
*'till the Day should dawn, and the Day Star*  
*arise in Mens Hearts.* 2 Pet. i. 19.

AND St. *John the Baptist*, the immediate Forerunner of the *Messiah*, opens and smooths the Way to his new and heavenly Dispensation, by the same Kind of Doctrine. *Repent* (says he) *for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.* Matth. iii. 2. Intimating, that this is the great Condition of our being admitted to the blessed Privileges of the Gospel of *Christ*. And the Saviour of the World, when he entred upon the Charge of his prophetical Office, preach'd the very same, and he left it in his Instructions to his Disciples after him, *That Repentance and Remission of Sins, should be* Luke xxiv. 47.  
*preached in his Name, among all Nations.*

AND we find St. *Peter* soon after executing these his Instructions in the third and fourth Chapters of the *Acts*, *Repent and be baptized; repent and be converted* (says he) *that your Sins may be blotted out.*

AND St. *Paul* explicitly declares the same, in very remarkable Words. *Be it known* Acts xiii. 38, 39.  
*unto you, Men and Brethren, that through*  
*this Man is preached unto you the Forgiveness*

SERMON. *ness of Sins; and by him all that believe,*  
 VI. *are justified from all Things, from which,*  
 ~~~~~ *ye could not be justified by the Law of Mo-*  
ses.

So that here at last, we meet with a real Exhibition, and open Declaration of all that was before but darkly hinted at, and faintly shadowed forth; an abundant Supplement indeed to all the Defects the Law labour'd under.

DID the Law purge almost all Things with Blood, so that *without shedding of Blood, there was no Remission?* Jesus Christ himself declares to his Disciples at the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, *This is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the Remission of Sins.*

WERE the legal Gifts and *Sacrifices* unable to make him, that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience? Could they only sanctify to the purifying of the Flesh, and that not in all Causes neither? The Blood of *Christ*, who offered himself through the eternal Spirit, without Spot to God, will purge our Consciences from dead Works, to serve the living God:

We

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 135

We are sanctified through the Offering of S E R M.
the Body of *Jesus Christ* once for all, by VI.
which he hath perfected for ever them that
are sanctified.

HEREIN therefore consist the great Excellence and Preeminence of the Gospel, that it has provided an universal Remedy for Sin, (even in those Cases where the Law was insufficient) for the Soul as well as the Body, for the inward Stain of Guilt upon the Conscience, as well as the outward Defilement, for the most heinous Offences, as well as the least *Peccadillos*.

AND in this Respect, the Doctrine of Remission of Sins upon Repentance, must be allow'd to be proper and peculiar to the Gospel; because 'tis in the Gospel alone, that 'tis plainly declared, and fully explained, through what Motives, by what Means, upon what Conditions, and for what Reason, it is dispensed by God: It is therein only that we are clearly informed, how God's incensed Justice, and his relenting Mercy, should be brought to concur in the same Act of Forgiveness. A Difficulty that the Light of Reason, or the Law of *Moses* could give no satisfactory

SERMON. Account of, but the whole mysterious

VI. Contrivance of it, is most admirably clear'd
 Chap. iii. up, in those comprehensive Words of St.
 ver. 23, Paul to the Romans, *For all have sinned,*
 24, 25. *and come short of the Glory of God; being*

justified by his free Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins, that are past, through the Forbearance of God.

FROM whence we may first learn, the State and Condition we were left in, both by Nature, and the Law, there being no Possibility of Justification or Salvation, by any Means or Helps, that they could afford us; *for all have sinned*, and for that Reason, *come short of the Glory of God.* 'Tis God's free and unmerited Favour alone, that shaped out the Way for us; for we are justified freely by his Grace. Freely, that is with Respect to the Sinner, though the Saviour paid a valuable Price for it. For 'tis through the Redemption that is in *Jesus Christ*, that this Justification is at last obtained: He gave himself a Ransom for all, *whom God hath also set forth to be a Propitiation.*

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 137

pitiation. Set forth, that is of old, in the SERM.
Types and Figures of the legal *Sacrifices*, VI.
representing the most perfect *Sacrifice* of *Christ* upon the Cross, that should be en-
tirely sufficient to propitiate God's Anger,
and satisfy his Justice. But then the Be-
nefits of this meritorious *Sacrifice*, must be
convey'd through Faith in his Blood, (in-
cluding our Repentance, and new Obe-
dience) for this is the Condition on our
Part required, that in Consideration of
the Dignity and Divinity of his Person,
we should rely upon the infinite Mercy
and Efficacy of the sacrificial Effusion of
his Blood; it being no other (as the Scrip-
ture warrants us to speak) than *the Blood*
of God himself. And lastly, the End of
this wonderful Dispensation, is assigned in
those Words; *To declare his Righteousness,*
for the Remission of Sins, that are past,
through the Forbearance of God. An End,
right worthy of God. It being at once an
ample Demonstration both of his Mercy,
and his Justice; of his Mercy in sparing,
and forbearing, and finally releasing the
Sinner, whom he might so deservedly have
punished; and of his Justice at the same
Time,

SERM. Time, in requiring a full Satisfaction for
 VI. Sin, from that most innocent and excel-
 lent Person, who was the Sinner's volun-
 tary Surety.

I HAVE given you this paraphrastical Explication of this important Passage, and I have deduced the Rest of my Scripture Proofs pretty much at length, that I might do at least, some Measure of Justice and Honour to the *everlasting Gospel* of *Jesus Christ*, so called in the 14th of the *Revelations*; as being from the Beginning, the only Instrument of Pardon, and Grace, and Salvation to penitent Sinners. That alone which could make out their clear Title to it, and give them unquestionable Security for it.

AND from hence it is at last, that we may safely decide the Question now before us, and pitch upon the only true Grounds of the *Psalmist's* Assurance; for no Doubt he who was an inspired Prophet, and was taught by the Spirit in many of his Predictions to point so directly at the *Messiah*; no Doubt, I say, he had for his own particular Comfort, a cheering Glimpse of the Gospel Light, and some blessed Anticipations

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 139

tions of the cleansing and the saving Nature of the precious Blood of the Lamb, that Lamb of God which was slain, to take away the Sins of the World, before the Foundations of it were laid; so that it was by the Power of Faith properly Evangelical, that he arrived at this *Plerophory* of Hope, and was emboldened to say as in the Text: *The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit, a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, wilt thou not despise.*

AND now having brought my Discourse to the Point that I designed; the Use that I shall make of what has been said, shall be very briefly, by Way of Consolation, Caution, and Admonition. And

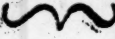
First, It must be thankfully acknowledged, that the very Terms of the Gospel, and the Publication of them to the World, is Matter of mighty Consolation to us.

'TIS true, God has saved us, and called us with a holy Calling, according to his own Purpose, and Grace that was given in *Jesus Christ* before the World began: And there was an exprefs Promise of the Restoration of lapsed Mankind, soon after the Fall of our common Parent.

BUT

SERM.

VI.


 BUT had we been left to find out the Meaning, or make the Application of this, by the dim Light of Nature, or the faint Images of the Law; our Condition had been but uncomfortable at best; we had remained in great Uncertainty and Perplexity: And being divided betwixt Hope and Fear, the Prevalency of Fear would have been too apt to betray all the Succours and Comforts, that our own weak Reason, or even a somewhat obscure Revelation could afford us; But *blessed be the Lord God of Israel! for he hath visited and redeemed his People, and hath given them Knowledge of Salvation by the Remission of their Sins, through the tender Mercy of God, whereby the Day-spring from on high hath visited us; to give Light to them that sit in Darknes and the Shadow of Death, and to guide our Feet in the Way of Peace.* Blessed be God's holy Name, that Hope of eternal Life, which he that cannot lye had promised of Old, was in due Time manifested through Preaching, and all God's gracious Purposes towards sinful Man, were made manifest, and freed from all Obscurity, by the Appearing of our Saviour

Luke i.
68, &c.

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 141

Jesus Christ, who hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light, through his Gospel. SERM. VI.

And this Gospel is as it were the Charter of the true Penitent, it makes him a free Denizon of Heaven; it entitles him to the happy Privilege of the Forgiveness of his Sins, to an Immunity from the Terrors of his own Conscience, and the Threats of eternal Death; and gives him the refreshing Hopes of an immortal Crown of Glory. And all these Things are nakedly exhibited to us with the utmost Degree of Evidence and Clearness: We are made acquainted with the same Scheme and Method of our Salvation; we know by whose Blood we were purchased; we know the Price was abundantly sufficient: we know what the Conditions are on our Part required: And if we take Care to qualify ourselves accordingly, if with hearty Repentance, and true Faith we turn unto God, we have a strong Consolation, a sure and stedfast Hope (and can give a Reason of that Hope) *that a broken and a contrite Heart, God will in no wise despise.* But then,

Secondly, THIS ought to be a Caution
to

S E R M. to us, (since we are so well assured that

VI. God will not despise our Contrition) not to make him so ill a Return, as to despise the Riches of his Goodness, and Forbearance, and long Suffering; not knowing that the Goodness of God leadeth us to Repentance.

FOR such Ignorance, could it be pretended, must needs be voluntary and affected; since Remission of Sins upon Repentance, is so expressly the Doctrine of the Gospel.

Acts xvii.
31.

AND God now commandeth all Men, every where to repent, because he hath appointed a Day; in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead. So that they who pretend to believe the Gospel, and yet do not repent; must sin both against the clearest Light of Conviction, and the most powerful Motives and Engagements to Repentance: And in so doing after the Hardness of their Hearts, they do most certainly treasure up to themselves Wrath, and the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God. For the Neglect

a broken Spirit and contrite Heart. 143

Neglect and Contempt of Mercy is the ^{SERM.} greatest of all Provocations, and justly de- ^{VI.} serves the severest Punishment. And there-


fore, how shall impenitent *Christians* escape, they who tread under Foot the Son of God, and count the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy Thing, and do Despight to the Spirit of Grace? How then can they escape indeed, if they continue impenitent, since there is not Salvation in any other Way: Since there is none other Name under Heaven, that is given among Men whereby we must be saved; and therefore,

Thirdly, LET this be an Admonition to all Christians to break off their Sins by a speedy Repentance, and flee from the Wrath to come, into the Arms of God's forgiving Mercy; especially let it be a Warning to us of this Church and Nation: To us who have enjoy'd the Gospel so long, and enjoy'd it in its clearest Light and purest Dispensation: To us who have had so mighty Works done among us, enough to have converted a Nation of *Heathens*, and to have brought them to *repent long ago*, in *Sackloth and Ashes*.

LET

SERM.

VI.

LET us not therefore be still deaf and insensible to all the Invitations of God's Goodness, and the Upbraidings of his loving Kindness. Let us not after all the pruning, and dressing, and cultivating that hath been bestowed upon us, still remain barren and unfruitful in the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*. But since we are God's Husbandry, and have been hitherto so carefully preserved, so tenderly cherished, and in every Thing by him so much enriched; let us endeavour at last to make some answerable Improvement, lest the Kingdom of God should be taken from us, and given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof; which yet God avert, through the Merits of *Jesus Christ*, to whom with the Father and holy Spirit, be ascribed as is due, all Praise, Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now, henceforth, and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON



S E R M O N VII.

Of the Example of *Christ*.



I COR. XI. I.

*Be ye Followers of me, even as I also
am of Christ.*



T. Paul, in whose natural S E R M.
Temper there seems to have VII.
been a just Mixture of Zeal
and Sincerity; after he once
became a Convert to the
Christian Faith, was as diligent and labo-
rious in planting, as careful and tender in
Vol. I. L preserving

SER M. preserving and cherishing the Church of
 VII. God; as he was before, ignorantly through
 Unbelief, fierce and furious to destroy it.

AND as in the *Jewish* Religion he profited beyond many of his Equals, being more exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of his Fathers, and touching the Righteousness which is in the Law blameless.

So in the Christian, he came not behind the very chiefeſt of the Apostles and Saints, in Soundness of Doctrine, or Exemplariness of Life; for it was his only Aim, and Care, and Study, his constant Exercise (as he testifies of himself) *always to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God, and towards Men*; that so (according to his own Direction to his Disciple *Timothy*) *he might be an Example to the Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.*

AND being thus conscious as he was of his own Integrity, when he is pressing others to Virtue and Godliness of Living, he frequently appeals to his own Practice, and proposes it as a Pattern worthy of Imitation.

THUS

Of the Example of Christ.

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THUS it is that he endeavours to pro-^{S E R M.}
voke the Emulation of the *Philippians* in ^{VII.}
that elegant persuasive Topic, which gives
us in one View, so lively an Idea of all the
Beauties and Graces of the Christian Re-
ligion. *Finally Brethren, whatsoever Things* ^{Philip. iv,}
are true, whatsoever Things are honest, ^{8.}
whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever
Things are pure, whatsoever Things are love-
ly, whatsoever Things are of good Report, if
there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise,
think (says he) on these Things.

BUT least the bare Contemplation of
Things however beautiful in Idea, should
not sufficiently warm their Zeal, and en-
gage their Affections, he points to the ve-
ry Life, and shews them all these amiable
Virtues exemplified in his own Conver-
sation.

AND therefore it is that he adds, *Those* ^{Ver. 9.}
Things that ye have learned, and received,
and heard, and seen in me, do.

BUT though he was enabled from the
Testimony of his Conscience, thus to com-
mend himself in all Simplicity, and godly
Sincerity, yet he was too sensible of his
own Infirmities, to set himself up for the

SERM.

VII.

perfect Standard of all that is good and virtuous. No! he professed himself to be no more than an humble Imitator, and to the best of his Abilities, a faithful Copier after the incomparable Original, the holy and the heavenly Life of the blessed *Jesus*; and he presumed not to think his own imperfect Copy worth the transcribing any farther, than it should be found conformable to that faultless and divine Original. And therefore all his Exhortations of this Kind, are to be understood with the Qualification expressed in my Text.

Be ye Followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Of me, *i. e.* who by God's Grace am the conscientious Teacher and Practiser of that Righteousness, *Christ* alone fulfilled; and a sincere Endeavourer after that Pitch of Perfection, which he alone was absolute Master of.

THESE Words then do in the first Place recommend to our Imitation that Example of *St. Paul*, and in him, that of all holy Men and Women, who have been shining Lights in their several Generations; but then withal they interpose a necessary Caution, and give us a Clue as it were to direct

direct our Imitation, that the Allay of humane Frailty may not make Example a false Guide to us, and cause us to deviate from that unerring Rule which was so punctually, and so perfectly observed by the Man *Christ Jesus*.

AND since this is plainly the Intention of the Words, I shall hence take Occasion (as I think I fairly may) to discourse;

I. *First*, OF the End and Use of Example in general.

II. *Secondly*, OF the peculiar Excellency and Preeminence of the Example of *Jesus Christ*, to which all other Examples ought to be reduced as their fixed and only Standard.

III. AND then *thirdly* to enquire, how far his Example is imitable by us.

IV. *Fourthly* and *lastly*, IN what particular Instances we ought more especially to imitate him. And

I. *First*, I shall consider the End and Use of Example in general. And to set this in a clearer Light, I must crave Leave to lay down these following Positions, *viz.*

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VII.

1. *First*, THAT no Example of any mere Man can be supposed to have the Authority of a Law strictly to bind, nor the Certainty of a Rule safely to direct.

2. *Secondly*, THAT the Examples of good and holy Men, even those which are recorded in the Scripture itself, are not always proposed to our Imitation.

3. *Thirdly*, THAT all those Examples which stand there recorded with plain Marks of Approbation, are not rashly to be drawn into Precedent. And yet notwithstanding,

4. *Fourthly*, THAT the Examples of such as have excelled, in Virtue are of very profitable Use, and of very good Effect, both by Way of Encouragement, and (under due Restrictions) by Way of Direction also to others.

1. *First*, My first Position is, that no Example of any mere Man can be supposed to have the Authority of a Law strictly to bind, or the Certainty of a Rule safely to direct.

THE Authority of a Law it cannot have, for there is one *Lawgiver*, who is able to *save*, and to *destroy*. God alone has the direct

Of the Example of Christ.

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direct Empire over Conscience. His Pre-^{S E R M.}
cepts are bound upon us by an eternal ^{VII.}
Sanction, and at the same Time they are
but the Transcript of his own Perfections.
Him therefore we are equally obliged
both to imitate, and to obey, and 'tis the
End and Excellency of all Religion to make
us like unto God.

BUT since it has pleased him to give a
complete Revelation of his Will to us, in
the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, to be a Standard
and unalterable Law to us in the whole
Conduct of our Lives; it is plain that no
Example of any Mortal (how great or good
soever) can carry any Authority with it,
or indeed afford us any safe Direction, but
only so far forth as it appears to be con-
formable to the Law of God, and so points
us to the streight Way that we are to
walk in.

BUT otherwise, the Example of the most
eminent for Sanctity or Knowledge, that
ever lived upon Earth, taken by itself, has
no binding Power in it: Nay it were a
Derogation indeed, both to the Authority,
and Perfection of Scripture to suppose it
had.

L 4

WE

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VII.

WE ought not therefore even in Honour to God himself, (who is the great Master to whom we must all stand and fall) to call any Man Master upon Earth, so as to become his servile Followers at all Adventures, or to think that there is any Obligation upon us, or that it will be any Warrant for us to do just as he does, unless we be satisfied at the same Time, that he does as he should do.

AND in Truth (setting aside the Authority of Example, which 'tis evident it cannot have) we cannot depend upon it for a safe and certain Rule of Practice; let the Person whom we propose to copy after, be never so deservedly esteemed both for Piety and Prudence. For the best and the wisest of Men have had their Slips and Blemishes, their weak and their blind Sides. And if we follow them too implicitly, we may chance to fall with them too.

No Man therefore is to be followed in all Things, unless he be totally exempt both from Error and Sin, and that is more than mere Man can pretend to attain to. No Man indeed is to be follow'd in any Thing, unless

unless we be otherwise well persuaded of SERM.
the Lawfulness of the Thing itself, and VII.
have better Proof of it than a favourable
Presumption, built only on the Example of
so frail and fallible a Creature as Man is.
And for the Reasons already given, I conceive my first Position may be allow'd to stand good, *viz.* that no Example of any mere Man can be supposed to have the Authority of a Law strictly to bind, nor the Certainty of a Rule safely to direct. But I add

2. *Secondly*, THAT the Example of good and holy Men, even those that are recorded in Scripture itself, are not always proposed to our Imitation.

FOR the bare Recital of an Action as done by this or that good Man, does not immediately infer that it must needs be a good Action.

AND we have in the sacred Scriptures an historical Account of several Actions, (without any Censure affixed to them) which perhaps it would not be easy to decide whether they more deserve to be condemned or commended. Such among others was *Joseph's Swearing by the Life of Pharaoh;*

SERM. *raab*; *Jacob's supplanting his Brother Esau*;

VII. and *Lot's* defending the Chastity of his heavenly Guests, by the Prostitution of his own Daughters: In all which 'tis disputed by the Learned, whether the Persons concerned did well or ill; and not without good Shew of Probability on both Sides. And what can be fairly collected from such a doubtful Example? Nothing at all till the Doubt be cleared up, with which it is entangled. Nor is it to be supposed that the Scripture which contains such plain and excellent Rules of Life, should in any Case intend to make a doubtful Example the Guide of our Actions.

BESIDES it is notorious enough, that the Scripture History sticks not to relate several Matters of Fact, which redound not to the Honour of the Persons to whom they are ascribed, who were otherwise of very virtuous and exemplary Conversation; such is the *Drunkenness* and *Incest* of *Noah*, the *Adultery* and *Murder* of *David*; the Sensuality and Idolatry of *Solomon*, *St. Peter's* cowardly Denyal of his Master, and the like: But it is hardly possible to think that the Eminence of these Men's Characters,

or

Of the Example of Christ.

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or the Strictness of their Virtue in other S E R M.
Respects, should make all these manifest VII.
Sins excusable in *them*; and it would be
every whit as gross to imagine, that their
Example should commend them as imita-
ble by us.

AND yet even such Things as these do
stand upon Record to very good Purpose:
Nay they may be allow'd to be our Exam-
ples, that is, Examples of Admonition and
Caution to us, to make us sensible of our
own Frailties, to call upon us to guard the
best we can against the sudden Surprise
and violent Insults of Temptation, and still
to have Recourse to the Aids of God's
Grace, *who is faithful*, and (if we be not
wanting to ourselves) *will not suffer us to be* 1 Cor. x.
tempted above what we are able. 13.

It may be granted therefore, that the
Blots and Blemishes which appear in some
of the fairest Copies of humane Virtue,
may have their very good Use and Con-
struction, if rightly consider'd; but cer-
tain it is, that a bare Relation of Fact
(though by an inspir'd Writer) cannot
change Vice into Virtue; and consequently
the Examples of good and holy Men, even
those

SERM. those which are recorded in Scripture it-
 VII. self, are not always proposed to our Imitation; because we must not imitate that which is vitious as some of their Actions most apparently were. But further I must assert;

3. *Thirdly*, THAT all those Examples which stand recorded in Scripture, even with plain Marks of Approbation, are not rashly to be drawn into Precedent. They cannot indeed with any Safety, because a small Variation in Point of Circumstance may alter the Quality of a whole Action; and that which might be very commendable in some one peculiar Case, or in some certain Respect, may become far otherwise, unless we take care to apply it just as we find it.

For instance, the extraordinary Zeal of *Phinehas* in transfixing *Zimri*, and *Cosbi*, in the very Act of Lewdness; though it was counted to him for Righteousness, (as the
 Pf. cvi. 30. *Psalmist* bears him Testimony to all Generations) and rewarded with the Covenant of an everlasting Priesthood; yet it is not hastily to be imitated by every private Man that is zealous for his God. For

Phinehas

Of the Example of Christ.

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Phinehas 'tis probable, as being the Grand-Son of *Aaron*, might be one of the Judges of *Israel*; and if so, he had express Commission from *Moses* to do what he did, as we read *Numbers* xxv. 5. Or else it is to be presumed that he was acted by a divine Impulse, too powerful to be disobey'd; and which was Tantamount to a Command for that Time. But however it was in him, it is certainly such a dangerous Degree of Fervour, as is not warrantable in any Man else, but who can produce as authentick a Commission either from God, or his lawful Vicegerent, as *Phinehas* himself is supposed to have had.

Of the like Nature was that of *Elijah's* commanding Fire from Heaven upon the Captains of *Abaziah*, and their *Fifties*. For though the Spirit of divine Jealousy came upon the *Prophet*, and moved him on that Occasion to execute God's just Vengeance in so terrible a Manner: Yet when *James* and *John* would fain have been employ'd in the like Commission, they were reprimanded by the meek and merciful *Jesus*, and told; *Ye know not what Manner of Spirit*

S E R M.
VII.

SER M. *rit ye are of!* plainly intimating that such
 VII. furious Zeal was by no Means consistent
 Luke ix. with *his* Design, who came not to *destroy*
 55. *Men's Lives, but to save them:* Nor with
 the Genius of that Religion which he came
 to institute, and which was like himself, all
 adorned and inspired with Love and Meek-
 ness.

AND upon much the same Reason several heroical Acts of *Sampson, Samuel,* and others, will hardly be found applicable to common Practice.

NOR is it only so in such extraordinary Cases as these: For in all complicated Actions there is always Room for Mistakes and Misapplication; and if we don't heedfully attend, not only to the Action in Gross, but to the particular Circumstances under which it comes recommended to us, we may run the Hazard of applying it in a wrong Respect, and suffer ourselves to be mislead even by a good Example, through Default of our own perverse Imitation. Thus the unjust Steward in the Parable, was commended by his Lord, because he had done wisely; though as wisely as he had

Of the Example of Chrif.

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had acted, it appears at the ſame Time to be very diſhoneſt; but 'twas his Prudence only that was commended, and therefore that alone is to be imitated, and not his Knavery.

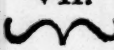
S E R M.
VII.
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So that in the Reſult I muſt conclude, that all thoſe Examples which ſtand recorded in Scripture, with plain Marks of Approbation, are not to be drawn into Precedent, becauſe they may be (as ſometimes they really are) extraordinary Actions which are not reducible to any ſtated Law, nor to be made the ordinary Meaſure of Duty; becauſe they are ſometimes alſo mixed Actions, which are not ſafely to be imitated, without carefully diſtinguiſhing between that which is good in them, and that which is bad; and eſchewing the one as much as we purſue the other.

BUT perhaps by this Time you may begin to ſuſpect, that I am proving Example to be altogether uſeleſs and inſignificant, ſince it ſeems, it muſt not be admitted either as a Law or a Rule, even though we take it from the beſt of Men, and ſuch their Actions as are related in Scripture, not only without Censure, but even with



SERM. Countenance and Commendation. But

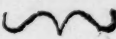
VII.  this is more than I intended to insinuate; for notwithstanding all that has been said, I laid it down as I thought I had Reason in the fourth Place;

4. *Fourthly*, THAT the Examples of such as had excelled in Virtue, are of very profitable Use, and of very good Effect, both by Way of Encouragement and (under due Restrictions) by Way of Direction also to others.

USEFUL they are by Way of Encouragement, and indeed with Respect to the Weakness and Corruption of our Nature very proper Spurs, and seasonable Helps towards a Proficiency in Godliness. For when we sit down by our melancholy selves, and reflect how weak our sinful Flesh is, and yet how strong in vitious Inclination; how numerous the Temptations are, with which we are surrounded, how subtle some, and how violent others: When we listen to the wily Suggestions of Satan, or consult our own secular Interest, we are too apt lazily to conclude, that the Duties of Religion are both unreasonable and unpracticable, especially some of the more  
sublime

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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Sublime Duties of Christianity, which are SERM.  
most above our natural Strength, and most VII.  
opposite to our fleshly Corruptions. 

BUT when we cast an Eye upon the sacred History, or look abroad in the World, and there behold the exalted Piety, and the noble Attainments of those great Souls who have trod the ruggedest Paths of Virtue, and conquered the most affrightening Difficulties in Religion; this is a sensible Demonstration that the Observance of God's Law is no impossible Thing, and that its hardest Sayings (with the Comfort and Assistance of his good Spirit) may be patiently heard, and cheerfully comply'd with.

AND this very Thought, if we make a due Improvement of it, will by Degrees ease us of our Fear, and sullen Despondency; it will chastize our Sloth, it will awaken our Care, it will animate our Endeavours, it will urge on our Industry, and perhaps fire us at last with an holy Emulation.

THIS is plainly the Use, that the Scripture itself designs to make, of the most eminent Examples therein proposed.

SERM. fed. Take my Brethren (says St. James)  
 VII. the Prophets, who have spoken in the Name  
 Chap. v. of the Lord, for an Example of suffering Af-  
 10. fliction, and of Patience. Behold ye count  
 them happy which endure. Ye have heard  
 of the Patience of Job, and seen the End of  
 the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and  
 of tender Mercy. An Instance at once a-  
 dapted to shew, that the severest Trials  
 may be made tolerable by Patience, and  
 that the Patient Soul which can content  
 itself quietly to submit to God's afflicting  
 Hand, is safe all the while, and shall be  
 happy at last, under the healing Wings of  
 his never failing Compassion.

Ver. 17,  
 18.

AND thus we are told again, That *Elias*  
*was a Man of like Passions with us, and he*  
*pray'd earnestly that it might not rain, and*  
*it rained not on the Earth for the Space of*  
*three Years, and six Months. And he pray'd*  
*again, and the Heaven gave Rain, and the*  
*Earth brought forth her Fruit.*

AND this latter Instance is so much the  
 nearer to our present Purpose, because the  
 Matter of *Elias's* Prayer is by no Means  
 proper for our Imitation. For 'tis by no  
 Means allowable to us, so much as to wish  
 to

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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to make Use of our Prayers, as an Instru-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
ment of Vengeance upon our Enemies, <sup>VII.</sup>  
which the Prophet, 'tis like, was commis-  
sion'd to do. But however 'tis a convincing  
Proof, how forcible and prevailing the Power  
of Prayer is; and 'tis withal a sufficient In-  
citement to us, to continue instant and fer-  
vent in it, with the comfortable Hopes  
though not of working Miracles, much  
less of wreaking our Malice by it; yet of  
receiving all the suitable Returns to it,  
which our real Needs do require, or God  
in his Wisdom and Goodness shall judge  
expedient for us.

AND to the same Intent, is the Rehearſal  
of the famous Liſt of Worthies, that are  
ſet down in the eleventh to the *Hebrews*.  
For after all the glorious Things that are  
ſaid of their Faith, and the wonderful Ef-  
fects that are aſcribed to it; the Apoſtle at  
laſt grounds an Exhortation to Conſtancy  
and Perſeverance, upon the memorable Ex-  
ample, and happy Succeſs of thoſe, whoſe  
noble Acts he had been recounting. *Where-*<sup>Chap. xii.</sup>  
*fore* (ſays he) *ſeeing we alſo are compaſſed*<sup>1.</sup>  
*about with ſo great a Cloud of Witneſſes, let*  
*us lay aſide every Weight, and the Sin which*



SERM. *doth so easily beset us, and let us run with*  
 VII. *Patience the Race that is set before us.*

Phil. iii.  
 14.

THUS far therefore, the good Examples of holy Men and Women, are of considerable Use and Advantage to us, in that they represent our Christian Duty as practicable and feasible; and provoke our sluggish Souls to exert their best Strength, and under the Conduct of divine Grace, to *press towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God, in Christ Jesus.*

BUT in Matters of Religion, relating to Doctrine, Disciple, Worship, or Practical Christianity; the ancientest Examples are chiefly to be regarded, and ought upon some Occasions carefully to be consulted.

NAY to go one Step farther, although we must never advance any human Example into a Law or a Rule, in Opposition or Derogation to God's written Word; yet in Cases where there may be Reason to doubt of the Meaning of the Law, or where the Thing is not so explicitly and precisely deliver'd, but that unreasonable Men may dispute and cavil about it; there the Practice and Pattern of the first and best Christians, comes in opportunely, as the clearest

## Of the Example of Christ.

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Comment upon Scripture, and the surest  
Determination of any Doubt that can arise  
concerning the Meaning of it, in any Que-  
stion of great Importance.

S E R M.  
VII.  
~

FOR Instance, *Episcopacy* has been generally supposed to be instituted by *Christ* himself, or at least by his Apostles, who had the Spirit of *Christ*, and could not be thought to act without its special Direction, in a Matter wherein the edifying and well governing of his Church was so nearly concerned. Of this however, in later Ages many unreasonable Doubts and Cavils have been raised, on Pretence that the Scripture is not sufficiently clear in the Point. Well, supposing, but not granting that the Scripture is not sufficiently clear, how shall we come at the clear Knowledge of its true Meaning? Why, we have only in this Case to look back to the Practice, and Pattern of the first and best Christians, who had the best Means and Opportunities of knowing the Mind of *Christ*, and his Apostles, as delivered in the holy Scripture; and were under no possible Temptations to misconstrue it, or depart

M 3

from

SERM. *doth so easily beset us, and let us run with*

VII. *Patience the Race that is set before us.*

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165

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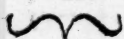
SER M. from it. And they we find did from the  
 VII. beginning, submit themselves to the Government of Bishops, as those whom the Holy Ghost had made Overseers of his Church; and paid the utmost Reverence, and Deference to their Order, Office, and Authority; and this at a Time, when they had no Power but what was purely spiritual, and no secular Advantage at all, but quite the contrary: For the Episcopal Chair was almost constantly chained to the Stake of Martyrdom, and thither also their People cherefully followed them their Leaders. And their Example in this Case, as it is the most authentic Interpretation of the Law, so ought it to be the final Determination of the Controversy; or else there can be no End of Controversy, where the Sense of Scripture is once called in Question.

THUS to put another like Case, with some little Variation; suppose the Change of the *Sabbath* into the *Sunday* or Lord's Day, not to be grounded (as perhaps it is not) upon any Commandment of *Christ* to his Apostles, nor upon any Apostolical Constitution; yet it might be very  
 reaso-

reasonably and safely taken up, (as probably it was) in Imitation of some of the Apostles, who especially in the Churches of the *Gentiles*, were wont from the very beginning, to hold their solemn Assemblies upon the first Day of the Week, in Honour of *Christ* and his Resurrection; and as by Virtue of this pious Example, it was by Degrees established, and is still laudably continued in the Church; so I reckon it would be highly indecent and disorderly, and indeed unlawful now adays, for any private Person, or Sett of Men to oppose it, or even for the whole Church to assume the Authority of altering it. The like might be inferred with equal Reason concerning the setting apart and consecrating of Places of divine Worship; the Use of Liturgies, the Maintenance of the Clergy by Tythes, and several Points that might be instanced in, of no inconsiderable Moment; in which admitting that we have no express Command, we have nevertheless very antient and laudable Precedents, and those so well founded in the Equity of Things, so analogous to what was practis'd in the *Jewish* Church, by God's Ap-

SERM.

VII.

1 Cor. xi.  
16.

pointment, and so consonant to the general Rules laid down in the *New Testament*; that if any Man will be contentious, and put his own Opinion into the Scale, against all this Weight of Reason and Authority; that Answer of the Apostle ought to silence him; *we have no such Custom, nor the Churches of God*; but quite the contrary from the Beginning.

THUS again in Matters of Decency and Expediency, (in which the Lawfulness is always presupposed.) The best Guide we can follow, unless we have a sufficient Stock of Judgment and Experience of our own, is the Example of some good and grave Man, who is able and careful to weigh the Circumstances of Things, and we may presume would not willingly trespass against Discretion or Charity, by the Use of any unfitting Liberty.

AND so likewise in the Case of a scrupulous Conscience, which is supposed to be persuaded of the Lawfulness of the Thing in Question in General, yet is perplex'd at the same Time with certain misgiving Suspicions, and unaccountable Fears, lest it should prove otherwise; I say in this Case

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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Case, the best and safest Rule of acting, is <sup>SERM.</sup> to pay all due Regard to the Determina-  
<sup>VII.</sup> tion of our Superiors, and to consider how  
others act in the like Case, whose Integrity we have no Reason to suspect, and whose Judgment we have Reason to prefer before our own.

PRIMITIVE Example therefore, where there is no express Law, or not so clearly expressed, but that captious Men may perplex it with doubtful Disputations; I say in such Cases, Primitive Example may have both its Force and Use, in resolving the Conscience, and directing the Practice of the honest and sincere Christian. But over and above these Lights and Helps, drawn from the Practice of the first and best Christians; that which I would chiefly recommend to you, (though I last mention it) is the Imitation of the Primitive Example, in the Practice of pure and undefiled Religion, of all those divine Graces and amiable Virtues, which were at first the shining Ornaments of the Christian Faith, and the genuine Proofs of its Truth and Power. The first *Christians* took up their Profession with no other View, but to pass through  
a per-



SERM. a persevering Course of holy Living and  
 VII. Dying, that so their Souls might be everlastingly saved, and reign with their once crucified Saviour, in his Kingdom of Glory. This being the only Star that could lead to *Christ*, exalted at God's Right Hand in Heaven; they held their Eye so immoveably fixed upon their End, that they could not mistake their Way; that their Conversation might almost literally be said to be in Heaven; or else to bring Heaven down upon Earth. 'Tis even marvellous to hear or read their Story; so ardently devout were they in the Worship of God, and so incessant in attending it; so united to him in Love, and so fervent in their Love of the Brethren for his Sake; so angelically temperate, chaste and pure, as if they had been all Spirit without Body; so charitable, so peaceable, so meek in their whole Deportment; so ready, so chearful to suffer for their Religion; and so invincibly patient under the cruellest Tortures that could be inflicted. In fine, so distinguished they were by these and many other Excellencies, that it raised Astonishment in all Beholders, and moved the Compassion, or else the

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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the Envy of their very Persecutors; inso-  
much that *Julian* the *Apostate* hoped to  
undermine or rival their Reputation, by  
recommending their Practice in some Re-  
spects, to the Imitation of his *Heathen* Sub-  
jects.

S E R M.  
VII.

AND if their exemplary Deportment,  
could not but raise a sort of malicious E-  
mulation in one of their bitterest Enemies;  
shall not we who are called *Christians*, and  
engaged in the same holy Warfare; shall  
not we hold their Example in high Esteem  
and Veneration? Shall not their Memory  
be ever precious, their Excellences ever a-  
miable, ever admirable, though by no  
Means adorable in our Eyes? Doubtless,  
to this very End, hath the Wisdom and  
Piety of the Church, set apart certain Days  
severally to commemorate the eminentest  
Saints and Martyrs; (and all of them to-  
gether as on this Day) that the Praise and  
Power of God's Grace might be manifest-  
ed and magnified, in the high and heavenly  
Attainments, of these his Servants; and  
that the Memory of their Praise-worthy  
Deeds might be preserved, as an Incite-  
ment to others, to tread in the only Paths  
that

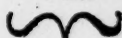
S E R M. that lead to true Glory, and become Followers of them, who with such a noble Ardour follow'd the Captain of their Salvation, *who was made perfect through sufferings.*

SINCE then we have so many Forerunners, who have shew'd what humane Strength, aided by divine Grace, can do in the laborious Race of Piety and Virtue; let us resolve to advance, let us strive to excel, *and so run, that we may obtain the glorious Prize.* In which, the Saints in Heaven will rejoice to have us Sharers with themselves. In one concluding Word, since we have seen the Perfection of our great Exemplar, (the Standard of all other Examples) so admirably copied according to humane Proportion, in his Martyrs, Confessors and Saints: Let it be the Aim of our pious Ambition, and the utmost Effort of our Zeal, by contemplating these well drawn Copies, to approach more and more to a Likeness of the divine Original, 'till at length we may be admitted to see him as he is, and become like unto him, in the Glory that is to be revealed in us. To which End we cannot better implore the

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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the divine Aid, than in the Collect for SERM.  
all Saints Day. VII.



*O Almighty God, who hast knit together  
thine Elect in one Communion and Fellowship  
in the mystic Body of thy Son Christ our  
Lord; Grant us Grace so to follow thy blef-  
sed Saints, in all virtuous and Godly Living,  
that we may come to those unspeakable Joys,  
which thou hast prepared for them that un-  
feignedly love thee, through Jesus Christ our  
Lord. To whom, with the Father, and Holy  
Spirit, be ascribed as is due, all Praise,  
Glory, Might, Majesty and Dominion now,  
and for evermore. Amen.*



SERMON

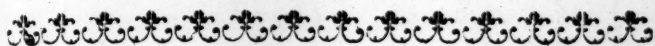






# S E R M O N VIII.

Of the Example of *Christ*.



I COR. XI. I.

*Be ye Followers of me, even as I also  
am of Christ.*



THESE Words as I observed SERM. VIII.  
to you, do recommend to  
our Imitation the Example of  
St. Paul, and in him, that of  
all holy Men and Women, who have been  
shining Lights in their several Genera-  
tions: But then withal they interpose a  
necessary Caution, and give us a Clue as it  
were

S E R M. were to direct our Imitation, so as that we  
 VIII. may keep our Eye still fixed upon the  
 faultless Original, the holy and heavenly  
 Life of the blessed *Jesus*, that most absolute  
 Pattern of all Perfection, by which the  
 less perfect Copies of humane Virtue, are  
 always to be measured and rectified.

AND therefore our Apostle conscious indeed of his own Sincerity, but equally sensible of his Imperfections, qualifies his Advice so, as he might be sure not to mislead his Followers. *Be ye Followers of me* (says he) *as I also am of Christ*. From which Words I thought I had a fair Handle to discourse;

I. *First*, OF the Use and End of Example in General,

II. *Secondly*, OF the peculiar Excellency and Preeminence of the Example of *Jesus Christ*. And to enquire

III. *Thirdly*, How far forth his Example is imitable by us.

IV. *Fourthly* and *Lastly*, IN what particular Instances we ought more especially to imitate him.

I. *First*,

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I. *First*, AND to shew the End and Use of Example in General, I took leave to lay down, and I hope I may have made good these four Positions.

1. *First*, THAT no Example of any mere Man can be supposed to have the Authority of a Law strictly to bind, nor the Certainty of a Rule safely to direct.

2. *Secondly*, THAT the Example of good and holy Men, even such as are recorded in Scripture itself, are not always proposed to our Imitation.

3. *Thirdly*, THAT all those Examples that stand there recorded, and that with plain Marks of Approbation, are not rashly to be drawn into Precedent. And yet

4. *Fourthly*, ALL this notwithstanding, that the Examples of such as have excelled in Virtue, are of very profitable Use, and of very good Effect, both by Way of Encouragement, (and under due Restrictions) by Way of Direction also to others.

But however, as a Supplement to the many Defects of humane Virtue, and a sure Guide to our own Practice, it will be necessary for us to consider.

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II. IN



SERM.

VIII.

II. IN the second Place, the peculiar Eminency of the Example of *Jesus Christ*, to which all other Examples are to be reduced as their fixed and only Standard.

IT has been an antient and standing Objection against all the famous *Law-givers*, and *Philosophers*, and the strictest Masters of Morals; that their Practice was still wide of their Principles, and that all their fine Rules and Precepts were only for Shew and Ostentation. And the *Stoics* in particular, who abound above others in swelling Words of Vanity, though they would persuade us, that their wise Man is equal, (if not superior) to the Deity, yet they could never shew the *Phoenix* that they boast of.

AND 'tis a lasting Reproach to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, those high Pretenders to Sanctity and Perfection, in our Saviour's Days, that they *said and did not*. That they bound heavy Burdens and grievous to be born, and laid them on Men's Shoulders, but themselves would not move them with one of their Fingers.

AND

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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AND indeed there is so much Frailty in S E R M.  
our Flesh, so much Corruption inherent in VIII.  
our whole Nature, that we must not pretend, the best of us all, we cannot attain during this mortal Life, to a perfect Degree of Innocence: But when all is said and done, he must be allowed to pass for the best Man, who has the fewest Faults.

THE singular, the only possible Exception to this experienced Truth, is the *holy Child Jesus*, who was conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and born of a pure Virgin. And it was the distinguishing Privilege of his miraculous Birth and Conception, that he came into the World entirely free from that Pollution, which all Mankind besides him do so plentifully derive from their common Parents.

AND his white and innocent Soul was so capable a Subject of Divine Grace, and so near the Influences of it, by Reason of the hypostatical Union; that God gave him *not the Spirit by Measure*, but in all Fullness, equal to the Largeness of his own Capacity, and the Greatness of our Needs, who have all receiv'd of it.

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AND

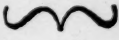
SERM. AND through him, *the Grace of God*  
 VIII. *which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared un-*  
 Tit. ii. II, *to all Men, teaching us, that denying all*  
 12. *Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should*  
*live soberly, righteously, and godly in this pre-*  
*sent World.*

WITH these Qualifications he set up, as well he might, for the Teacher and Practicer of all Virtue; and he actually fulfilled (as it became him) all Manner of Righteousness, *but Sin he did none, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.* This was the compleatest Rule of holy Living, and his Life was as regular as his Law: His Doctrine was apparently of God, and his Conversation was all heavenly and god-like. His Precepts were truly noble and sublime, and therefore not without their Difficulties: But his Practice was always uniform, and parallel to the highest and the hardest Pitch of Duty that he imposed on others. In one Word, his Example was a living and perpetual Commentary upon his Gospel, and a never failing Direction to all those, who are willing to *walk as he walked.*

## *Of the Example of Christ.*

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AN Example it was, not like that of o-  
ther Mortals, mixed up of Vice and Vir-  
tue, and therefore only to be admired, be-  
cause the Allay of Imperfection was less  
than usual; but it was the very Mirrour  
of unspotted Goodness, without the least  
imaginable Blemish.

SERM.  
VIII.  


It was (if I may use an Illustration that  
has too much of Shadow in it) an entire  
Constellation of all Kind of Virtues, join-  
ing their Light in one, the better to direct,  
and influence the Practice of Mankind, and  
guide them streight through all the Offi-  
ces of humane Life.

HEREIN we may discern how Greatness  
and Humility, Power and Moderation, In-  
nocence and Freedom, Zeal and Meekness,  
may dwell together, and act in Union.  
Herein we may behold perfect Piety and  
Justice, and Charity, and Purity, and  
Temperance; and all those Graces adorn-  
ed with Gentleness, and crown'd with a  
most invincible Patience, under all Man-  
ner of Obloquy, Oppression and Persecu-  
tion, and still triumphant.

IN brief, we may learn from hence, how  
to *pass the Time of our Sojourning* here on  
N 3 Earth



SERM VIII. Earth, (through all the difficultest Trials) acceptably to God, inoffensively towards Men, and profitably for ourselves. An Example worthy of the Son of God incarnate, and which he alone could give, who was God and Man in one Person.

SINLESS Perfection is the Prerogative only of such an extraordinary Person as this: And his Example not only deserves the Preeminence upon that Score, but it ought to be made indeed, the fix'd Standard of all other Examples whatsoever.

OTHER Examples, unless we be very heedful, may easily mislead us, and indeed so many, and so various are the Errors and Follies of Mankind, and some of them so well disguised under the specious Shew of Piety and Religion; that unless we bring them to the Test, we shall run a great Hazard of being deceived by them. But compare them once with their unerring Original, and their Irregularities will soon appear. For there is no real Instance of Virtue, but what is plainly visible in his most holy Life, or at least fairly deducible from his Pattern. And therefore that Practice which, in like Circumstances, is found up-  
on

## *Of the Example of Christ.*

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VIII.

on the Comparison, to be widely different from, or contrary to his blessed Example; that Practice, I say, for that very Reason, must needs be faulty and irregular. And on the other Hand that Practice, which within due Circumstances, bears a just Conformity to the great Exemplar, is sufficiently warranted upon that Account. And the Reason is, because there is so exact a Harmony betwixt his Law and his Life, that what the one prescribes, the other really exhibits; and what the one teaches you in Words, the other presents before your Eyes, in sensible Experiment. But lest we should still mistake in the Application, through our own Perverseness and Folly, it will be useful to enquire,

III. *Thirdly*, How far the Example of *Christ* is imitable, or fit to be imitated by us.

AND here I need not observe, because it is what cannot escape any Body; that it lies not upon us to imitate him in his miraculous Operations. He in his great Charity, heal'd the Sick oftentimes with a Touch,

SERM. with a Word; *he fasted forty Days and forty Nights*; but these are Things impossible to us; and therefore we are not to take the Measure of our Charity, or Abstinence from hence.

BUT besides these Works of his, which are plainly above our Power, there are also other Acts done by him upon some special Occasions, which we must not presume to imitate.

THUS he *drove the Buyers and Sellers, and Money-changers out of the Temple*, with a Sort of holy Indignation; which St. Jerome indeed reckons amongst the chiefest of his Miracles; as supposing that the Majesty of his Divinity shone forth in his very Countenance, and struck such a sudden Terror upon this profane Crew, that they could no longer endure his Presence.

BUT however that might be, it seems to be an Exercise of Power, more than belongs to us. And though it may justify a prudent and well timed Zeal against the Profanation of God's House, yet it commits no Authority to private Christians, as such, to animadvert upon it, in like Manner, or  
in

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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in any other Way, that the Heat of their SERM.  
Zeal may prompt them to, without the VIII.  
Direction or Permission of the Law.

THUS again, he brands the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* with the Name of *Vipers*, and *Hypocrites*, and *blind Guides*; and plainly endeavours to fasten the infamous Character upon them, because *he knew what was in Man*; and could see into all the Subtilty, Insincerity, and Rottenness of their Hearts. But it is not proper for us to pass such a severe and stabbing Censure, even where there is but too much Cause of Suspicion; because as private Persons we want the Authority, as well as Discernment to judge of People's Intentions, or even to pronounce a hard Sentence upon their suspected Actions.

WE need not therefore, we must not indeed call out such Instances as these, which are altogether improper for our Imitation. But where the Precept and Example of *Christ* go Hand in Hand, and lead the Way to any religious or moral Duty; there we may safely, and we are bound obsequiously to follow. For there is no one Branch of our Christian Duty,



SERM. Duty, but what is most exemplary, and  
 VIII. conspicuous in the Life and Death of the  
*holy Jesus*. And therefore in all such Cases, the closer we copy after his Example, the more acceptable and perfect is our Obedience.

'Tis true, we cannot hope to arrive at the Pitch of Perfection, of which he alone was the absolute Master; we cannot *fulfil all Righteousness*, as he did. This is more than any (besides some bold and extravagant *Enthusiasts*) have ever pretended to: More indeed than mere Humanity could ever attain to. But *to be holy as he is holy, and perfect as he is perfect*; that is in humble Imitation of him, though not in equal Degree to him; this is incumbent upon every Christian.

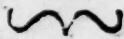
BUT we need not measure our Christian Duty, nor level our Imitation of *Christ*, according to the precise Letter, or every minute or occasional Circumstance of the Action, by him enjoyn'd, or performed.

FOR Instance, it is expressly said by our  
 Matth. xvi. blessed Saviour, *if any Man will come after*  
 24. *me, let him deny himself, and take up his*  
 Gal. v. 24. *Cross and follow me. And they that are*  
*Christ's*

Of the Example of Christ.

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*Christ's, have crucified the Flesh, (says St. Paul) with the Affections and Lusts.* SERM.  
VIII.



Now though this is questionless Matter of strict Duty, conformable to the Pattern of a suffering Saviour; yet I reckon it is to be construed in a moral, rather than a literal Sense; implying that a Christian ought to be prepared, so to suffer the greatest Afflictions, and, if Need be, the last Extremities for the Sake of *Christ*; but not inferring a direct Obligation to bear the Cross just as he did; and literally to die the very same Manner of Death; unless some special Providence call him to it.

So also when we read, that our *Saviour* Luke vi. 12. *spent whole Nights in Prayer*: His Example is a plain Reproof to our Coldness, and Infrequency in Devotion, and provokes us to pray more earnestly, and fervently and constantly; but that we should go out into a Mountain to pray, and that by Night, or that we should continue *all Night in Prayer*, as he did; these are Circumstances which suited his Occasions at that Time, but do not affect the main Duty, nor do they seem very directly to concern, at least not to oblige us.

ONCE

SERM. ONCE more. The Celebration of the  
 VIII. Lord's Supper according to *Christ's* holy  
 Institution and Example, is sufficiently recommended, nay directly enjoin'd in those solemn Words, *Do this*; (the same that he himself had been then doing) *breaking of Bread, and blessing it, and giving it to his Disciples. Do this* (says he) *in Remembrance of me.*

THIS therefore is certainly a most indispensable Duty. But then, that the Sacrament should be given in unleaven'd Bread, or in the Wines of *Judæa*; and that it should be taken in a common Table Posture, and the very Posture that was then used; these were mere Circumstantials, adapted purely to the Usages of that Time, and partly to the Convenience of that Place, in which it was now first instituted; and therefore not obligatory to those that live in other Ages or Countries; when it will suffice to communicate, in such Bread and Wine as the Place shall afford; and in a Posture of Devotion sure, rather than Familiarity, which would be a very irreverent Kind of Imitation.

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AND should we imagine ourselves to be obliged to follow all the imitable Actions of *Christ*, in every the minuteſt Circumſtance and Punctilio; this would multiply unneceſſary Scruples, and entangle Mens Conſciences in Snares, and render Chriſtianity, which is in itſelf a very plain and eaſy System of Religion, an intricate and an endless Buſineſs.

THE Reſolution then of the Queſtion, how far *Chriſt* is imitable by us, as it may be collected from what has been ſaid, appears at laſt to be this; *viz.* That in his extraordinary Actions which fall not under any Precept, we muſt not preſume to imitate him; but in all ordinary Caſes, wherein we have his Command as well as Example, there we may and ought; but yet not with an over ſcrupulous Adherence to the bare Letter, or the Outſide of an Action, and ſuch ſlender Circumſtances as are little or nothing material: Only with a conſcientious Regard to the main Subſtance of the Duty, and an humble Endeavour after ſuch Degrees of Integrity in our Obedience, as may ſhew us to be Approvers of Things that are excellent, and Lovers of

I our



SERM. our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity. And  
 VIII. for our better Direction herein, it will be  
 proper to be considered;

IV. *Fourthly*, IN what particular Instances we ought more especially to imitate him.

AND this I may venture to say, must be in those heavenly Graces and Virtues which being so peculiar and remarkable in himself, he took care to engraft into his Religion, as its chiefest Ornament; and to recommend to his Disciples, as the honourable and distinguishing Badge of their Christian Profession. And these I take it are principally his Charity, his Humility, his Meekness, and his Patience.

I. THE *First* is his Charity, so incomparably great, and generous, and good, that it must needs inflame us with a holy Emulation, and compel us to transcribe (the best we can) the noble Pattern. *Greater Love* (says he who alone was able to excel it) *hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friend.* But that the Son of God should take up the Life of a Man, on Purpose to lay it down again,

## Of the Example of Christ.

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in the very Stead of his worst Enemies; SERM. VIII.  
that Sin the only hateful Thing in the World, should be the Cause of this marvellous Vouchsafement; that Sinners the most unlovely of all God's Creatures, should be the courted Objects of such condescending Love; this sure passes all Expresssion and Imagination. And yet it is not altogether out of the Reach of our Imagination. No! St. *John* makes it a necessary Inference. *Beloved, if God loved us, we ought also to love one another.* And that we may think ourselves obliged to come up as near in Degree to this divine Love, as we are capable of; he tells us again, *hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us, and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.* Nay, our Saviour himself, enforces the Duty from his own unparallel'd Example: *This is my Commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* 1 Ep. iv. 11. 1 John iii. 16. John xiii. 34.

NAY, he makes it the very Characteristic, and critical Proof of a genuine Disciple; *by this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* John xiii. 35.

AND

SERM.

VIII.

AND now what can we think? Is not this the strongest Obligation, the most engaging Motive to brotherly Love and Affection, in Obedience to him, in Imitation of him who loved us so much, so generously and undeservedly? And how can any Christian indeed, find in his Heart to be uncharitable to his Brother? How can he prevail with himself to make so unsuitable a Return, to the most endearing Love of his dying Saviour? Let him look upon him as hanging on the Cross, and see whether there be any Injury or Indignity, like unto what he suffered for our Sakes; and at our very Hands. If not, let him lay his Hand upon his Heart and say; "I will, O merciful Lord, I will after thy most blessed Example, *Love my very Enemies, bless them that curse me, do Good to them that hate me, and pray for them that despitefully use me and persecute Me.*" Nay, by thy divine Assistance, I will die (if I be called thereunto) even as thou didst, with a charitable Petition for my unrelenting "Murderers". But not to enlarge too much upon so copious and inviting a Topic; I must remember,

2. Secondly,

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2. *Secondly*, THAT his Humility is also set before us, as a fair Copy for us to write after. And here again, our profoundest Admiration must needs be all employ'd, to consider the wonderful Stoop of heavenly Condescension. That heavenly Glory should contrive to shew a dark Side, that incomparable Majesty should be content to be degraded, and Immensity it self (as it were) to be lessened; that the Son of God equal to his Father in all essential Perfections, should from the supereminent Height of godlike Greatness, descend to a Familiarity with Man, and put himself into the same Rank and Condition with us, his Subjects and Vassals by Creation: That he should deign to take our Nature upon him, and to wear the despicable Rags of Mortality, and after a Life spent in the meanest of Circumstances, and the humblest of all good Offices, that he should submit to die as miserably and ignominiously as Mortal ever did; and all to save a perishing World of Sinners. We cannot sure but wonder, and adore that condescending Goodness, which lead the Way to this prodigious Abasement. But 'tis not

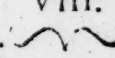
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S E R M.  
VIII.



SERM. enough to stand gazing and admiring; we  
 VIII. must gird up our Loyns, and be ready to  
 follow him; we must in our Proportion,  
 humbly imitate his truly great, nay glorious Humility.

THIS is what St. Paul inculcates with much Pathos, and earnest Obsecration. If  
 Phil. ii. 1. (says he) *there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels or Mercies.* And what is it that he would recommend in these pathetic Words? Why Unity and Charity, and (as the Preservative of both)  
 Ver. 3. Humility of Mind. *In Lowliness of Mind let each esteem others better than themselves.* And then as the most powerful Enforcement to this Duty, he immediately sub-  
 Ver. 5, &c. joins; *Let the same Mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the Form of God, thought it no Robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no Reputation, and took upon himself the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men; and being found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. Let Mortals therefore be ashamed of exalting themselves;*

themselves ; let sinful Mortals hide their S E R M. VIII.  
 Faces in the Dust, when they remember,   
 how amazingly the Maker and Saviour of  
 the World was abased ; let the Pride of all  
 Glory vanish, let Crowns and Sceptres, and  
 all the Ensigns of earthly Power and  
 Greatness, bow and do Obeisance to the  
 Cross of *Christ* ; let them learn to despise  
 their own borrow'd Honour, from the Lord  
 and Prince of Life and Glory, from him  
 who despised so much Shame, and Igno-  
 miny for their Sakes.

3. *Thirdly*, ANOTHER amiable Grace  
 nearly ally'd to Humility, and sweetly re-  
 sembling it, is Meekness. These two are  
 commonly join'd together in Scripture.  
*Walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith ye* Eph. iv. 12.  
*are called* (says St. Paul) *with all Lowli-*  
*ness and Meekness.* And our Lord himself  
 sets us a plain Lesson of both in one ; in  
 his own admirable Pattern, *Learn of me,*  
 (says he, so mildly, so condescendingly) *for* Matth. xi.  
*I am meek and lowly.* And they are fitly <sup>29.</sup>  
 join'd together these two ; For Meekness is  
 founded in Humility ; and supported by it.  
 It is the high proud Spirit, that is liable to  
 sudden Sallies of Passion, and strong Com-  
 motions ;

SERM. motions; that is apt to retain bitter and  
VIII. lasting Resentments, and to pursue malicious Revenge. But now he that has a modest and mean Opinion of himself; he that is truly poor in Spirit; that Man is not quickly sensible of small Slights, and Neglects; and not much to be moved at greater Offences and Injuries. He understands humane Nature too well, to think himself without Faults, or to expect to find others so; he knows there can be no Living in the World, without frequent Trespasses against one another. And therefore he can *serenely* determine with himself, that none shall surprize or transport him beyond his Temper; he can resolve aforehand, to overlook some of the lesser Size with a generous Contempt, to bear others with Equanimity, in all to forbear his private Revenge, even though he be constrain'd to seek a legal Redress; and lastly, to be in Readiness to forgive an offending Brother, if he repent, and rather than fail without any Reparation or Repentance; and even to bury the Injury in Forgetfulness, so as it may never be remembered

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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membred to the Detriment of the injured Person. SERM.  
VIII.

How becoming is this Christian Ornament, of a meek and a quiet Spirit? How noble a Mastery over the Passions? How high and difficult the Attainment? And how much do the best humane Copies of this Virtue (such as are rare, very rare to be met with) how exceedingly much, do they come behind the incomparable Original?

AND therefore among mere Mortals, both the Obligation and the Motive to Forbearance and Forgiveness, will always be mutual, if not equal; because he that is now the Person injured, may in his Turn probably become the Trespasser.

BUT see how transcendently bright this Grace shone forth in the blessed *Jesus*? He was free from all imaginable Imperfections, absolutely *without Spot or Blemish*; *he went about doing Good*; Harm or Wrong he did none, just Cause of Offence he never gave to any. In a Word, he was perfect Innocence, as well as perfect Goodness, as well as perfect Meekness; and yet how was this heavenly Man, this God incarnate, treated during his Ministry here on Earth? Even

O 3

with



SER M. with the basest Ingratitude, and foulest Indignity; he was encountred at all Turns, with the most malicious Opposition, loaded with the most undeserved Reproaches, and with the falsest, and yet most heinous Accusations; and pursued with restless and unrelenting Malice, even to his dying Hour.

AND how did he *endure all this Contradiction of Sinners?* How did he pass thro' this Scene of repeated Trials? Perfectly composed and undisturb'd: Insomuch, that amidst all these trying Provocations, wherein his Innocence, his Dignity, his Divinity were often attacked; he seem'd to suspend his own Authority, as well as suppress his Resentment, and would seldom administer so much as a sharp, though just Reproof; unless when it was extorted from him by the insulting Malice, and odious Hypocrisy of the *Scribes and Pharisees*. But even to them as well as others, his Words were generally mild and soft, though his Argument might carry harsh Consequences with it, that they had drawn upon themselves. To their little Reflections upon his Parentage, and Countrey, he deigned

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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no other Answer but this proverbial Say-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
ing, familiar to them; *A Prophet is not* <sup>VIII.</sup>  
*without Honour, save in his own Countrey,* <sup>Mat. xiii.</sup>  
*and in his own House.* The more scanda-<sup>57.</sup>  
lous Imputation of being a *Glutton*, and a  
*Wine-bibber*, a *Friend of Publicans*, and  
*Sinners*; he gently wiped off, only by inti-  
mating his charitable Intention in conver-  
sing with such People, in another Proverb.  
*They that be whole need no Physician, but* <sup>Mat. ix.</sup>  
*they that are sick.* That most impudent <sup>12.</sup>  
Charge, *this Fellow casteth not out Devils,* <sup>Mat. xii.</sup>  
*but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils;* <sup>24.</sup>  
He calmly refell'd by another receiv'd  
Maxim. *Every Kingdom divided against* <sup>Ver. 25.</sup>  
*itself, is brought to Desolation.* In the Ap-  
plication of which, he securely left his Ac-  
cusers to be the Judges, both for him, and  
for themselves. And even when the *Jews*  
*took up Stones, to stone him*, as a Blaspheme-  
mer; he first gently upbraided their Vio-  
lence in these Words: *Many good Works* <sup>John x. 31,</sup>  
*have I shew'd you from my Father; for* <sup>32.</sup>  
*which of those Works do ye stone me?*

AND then he went on sedately to refute  
the Charge of Blasphemy, from their own  
Scripture. To shut up this wonderful

O 4

Scene;

SERM. Scene; when they were preparing to put  
 VIII. the finishing Hand to all their Outrages,  
 by hawling him to Judgment and Execution: How did he sustain the furious Prosecution; not with a fullen, but a composed Silence, such as proceeded from a Consciousness of his own Innocence, and a Disdain of the Accusation laid against him? How serene and unmoved did he bear all their Taunting, Spitting, Buffetting, Scourging, and all the various Ceremonies of Mockery, and Inventions of Cruelty? And when he was just about to expire, how did he pour forth his meek and innocent Soul, in a compassionate Plea, and charitable Intercession for his Crucifiers.

If therefore ye would see a finish'd Piece of Meekness, and in its proper *Attitude*; ye must look up to the Cross of *Christ*; there it hangs most amiable to behold, and hence must ye take the Copy, if ye would strive to excel, or aim at a true Likeness, Come hither then ye imperfect Copiers, who by the quick Sense you have of Injuries, are made too sensible of your own Failings; nay, come hither ye high Spirits that are subject to inward Swellings and Tumults,

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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SERM.  
VIII.

Tumults, that are about to start at every Shadow of Offence, and pursue your Revenge upon the least Provocation. Come hither, and behold your Saviour hanging on his Cross, and at the same Time pleading, praying, bleeding for his cruel hard-hearted Murderers. For surely, when ye have throughly view'd, and considered the moving Spectacle; this silent Rebuke from the Cross, will lay the Storm of all your passionate Resentments, unless your Spirits be more boisterous than the Winds and Seas, that once so suddenly sunk into a Calm, and obey'd him.

4. *Fourthly*, THE wonderful Patience of the crucified *Jesus*, is another Excellency of his, that is especially recommended to our Imitation; which we behold on the Cross, as in its highest Exaltation; but it is very remarkable in all the preparatory Steps towards his Crucifixion. Meet him in the Garden, where the Scene of this cruel Tragedy opened; there you will find his Soul and Body sympathizing with each other, and both in extreme Agonies; and yet not the least impatient Word escaped from him, even when his Sweat was, as it were,



S E R M. were, great Drops of Blood falling to the

VIII. Ground, when his Soul was exceedingly sorrowful, when he was in great Anguish, disturbed in Spirit, and sore amazed; even under all this his deep Concern for a whole World of Sinners, in whose Place he had made himself the Substitute; in how submissive and resigned a

Luke xxii. 42. Strain did he pray: *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass away from me; nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done*; which was in Effect, not to pray against his Death, but for it; entirely submitting to his Father's good Pleasure, with whose Counsels he was intimately acquainted. And when he came to taste the very Dregs of this Cup; how quiet, how mute was the Lamb of God, under all the Cruelties previous to his Slaughter, under all the torturing, lingring Pains, of dying (as it were) several Deaths in one? And yet during this tedious Interval, the Powers of Darknes were let loose against him, and the Influences of Heaven were suspended; and so thick and black was the Cloud of the divine Displeasure (not yet appeased) that to his suffering Humanity, it look'd like utter

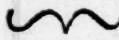
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Of the Example of Christ.

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ter Dereliction; insomuch, that he cry'd S E R M.  
out with a loud Voice, *My God, my God,* VIII.  
*why hast thou forsaken me?* Which was in- Mat. xxvii.  
deed a strong Expostulation, not for his own 46, &c.  
Sake, but in Behalf of the Sinners he re-  
presented, whose Condition had been most  
abandoned, without his Interposal. Where-  
upon the Light of God's Countenance im-  
mediately shone out again, that he might  
see the Travail of his Soul, and be satis-  
fied; after which he only said; *it is finish-*  
*ed;* and commending his Spirit into the  
Hands of his Father, *he bow'd his Head,* John xix.  
*and gave up the Ghost,* with all the Acqui- 30.  
escence, Tranquility and Complacency that  
is possible. Consider then, and behold,  
was there ever Sorrow like unto his Sor-  
row, wherewith the Lord did afflict him  
in the Day of his fierce Anger? And was  
there ever Patience like unto his Patience,  
wherewith he bore the Heat of all his  
Wrath, until it was waxen cool, and per-  
fectly attuned, though at no less a Price  
than the Sacrifice of himself. And this is  
the heroic Pattern that we are to copy  
after. For even he himself, the great *Cap-*  
*tain of our Salvation,* hath required us to  
*take*

SERM. *take up the Cross and follow him*; and St.

VIII. *Peter* (a chief Leader under him) hath  
 told us, that for this Purpose we were in-

<sup>1</sup> Ep. ii. lifted into his Service. For even hereunto  
<sup>21, 22, 23.</sup> were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example that ye should follow his Steps; who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatned not; but committed himself, to him, that judgeth righteously.

AND certainly the Contemplation of a Suffering Saviour, (*the Just for the Unjust*) must be enough to stop the Mouth of our loudest Complaints, and pluck out the Sting of the most grievous Afflictions that can befall us. For why, as the Prophet  
 Lam. iii. 39. speaks, *Why should a living Man complain, a Man for the Punishment of his Sins?* Let the living Sinner reflect upon his dying Saviour, and consider with himself; that all temporal Punishment, how sharp soever, must needs fall short of his own just Deserts; far short of what Christ the *spotless Lamb* once suffered in his Stead; and yet he like the Sheep before the Shearer was dumb, and opened not his Mouth. The Ingenuity

genuity of the *Thief upon the Cross*, might carry us thus far to acknowledge, *that we are under Condemnation, and indeed justly, as receiving the due Reward of our Deeds;* even when we feel the Severity of God's avenging Hand. And shall we decline that Cross, which we have made our own, by too sure a Title? Shall we turn Cowards and Deserters under this glorious Banner? Shall we think it a Hardship, even when we are counted worthy to suffer with our Saviour, and for him? Even this sorest Burden of his, is comparatively light, considering the Aids and Encouragements that are graciously vouchsafed us; the Cross, when the heaviest, can never so press us down, but that we may lift up our Eyes, and behold the Crown of Life held out, as the Prize of a persevering Patience, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

To conclude therefore, let us bless and adore the Goodness of God, who has given us such mighty Encouragements of Virtue, as well as eminent Patterns of it, in the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, and glorious Company of the Apostles, the noble

SERM.  
VIII.

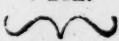


SERMON. ble Army of Martyrs, and all those pious  
 VIII. and devout Souls, that have lived and died  
 in their several Generations, humbly copying  
 after that faultless and divine Original;  
 the most exemplary Life and Death of the  
 immaculate *Jesus*.

AND since we are encompassed with so  
 great a Cloud of Witnesses, and well With-  
 ers, who have beaten the rugged Path,  
 through which we are to walk; and shewn  
 it to be passable: Let us proceed cheer-  
 fully in our Christian Course, and dili-  
 gently follow their Steps, but with Eyes  
 perpetually fixed upon the glorious Cap-  
 tain of our Salvation, that careful and un-  
 erring Guide of Souls, and who alone is  
 able to reduce those that forsake the right  
 Way, and go astray. Let us not there-  
 fore call any Man Master upon Earth, any  
 farther than he is a Teacher of that Right-  
 eousness, which is only to be learned in  
 the School of *Christ*. Let us not take any  
 Man for our Pattern, but who is himself a  
 faithful Copier after *Christ*. Let no great  
 Names, specious Shews, or high Pretences  
 amuse us, let not the reputed Wisdom or  
 Goodness of any Mortal deceive or draw

*Of the Example of Christ.*

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us aside; let us not commit ourselves to SERM.  
the Conduct of any but him, who is him- VIII.  
self *the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*   
Let his Precepts be a *Lamp to our Feet*,  
and his Example a *Light to our Paths.*  
Him let us in all Things revere and obey;  
him let us always admire and imitate. Let  
us imitate as far as we are able his mar-  
vellous Love, his meek and humble Con-  
descension, his unspotted Purity, his in-  
vincible Patience, his heavenly Piety, and  
that universal Goodness and Holiness, that  
adorned and sanctified every Action of his  
Life, and made his Death so acceptable a  
Sacrifice in the Sight of God. So shall  
we really grow in Grace, and advance to-  
wards Perfection, 'till at length we arrive  
at Glory, and be made like unto him, as  
far as our finite Nature is capable, both  
in Holiness and Happiness. Which God  
grant, &c.

SERMON

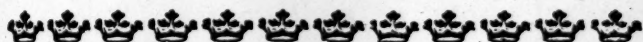
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# SERMON IX.

Of *Christ's* Sufferings.



HEB. xii. 3.

*For consider him that endured such  
Contradiction of Sinners against  
himself, lest ye be wearied, and  
faint in your Minds.*



It was Part of old Simeon's SERM.  
Prediction, when the holy IX.

*Jesus* was first presented to  
the Lord in the Temple;  
*Behold this Child shall be set*  
*for a Sign, which shall be spoken against;*  
VOL. I. P violently



SER M. violently opposed; that is, with all Manner of Contempt and Reproach, and Malice, and Outrage. A Prediction which was verified from Time to Time, throughout the whole Course of his wearisome Life, and compleated at last in a most cruel and ignominious Death.

IX.

ALL this he knew full well himself, and frequently hinted to his Disciples; and some Time before the Accomplishment of all his Sufferings, he took Occasion (as we find *Matth. xvi. 21.*) to shew them in Particular, how *he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many Things from the chief Priests and the Elders, and the Scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third Day.*

THIS in his high Wisdom he thought fit to declare aforehand, lest when it should happen, the Surprise should add to their Consternation, and at once extinguish all their Zeal, and disarm them of their Courage.

AND therefore he not only acquaints them with what should befall himself, but he prepared them also to expect the like Treatment. *Behold I send you forth, as Lambs amongst Wolves: Remember the Word*

Luke x. 3.

## Of Christ's Sufferings.

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that I have spoken unto you; The Servant S E R M.  
is not greater than his Lord. If they have IX.  
persecuted me, they will also persecute you. John xv.  
And ye shall be hated of all Men, for my 20.  
Name's Sake; and be betray'd by Parents, Luke xxi.  
and Brethren, and Kinsfolks, and Friends. 16.  
Yea the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth John xvi.  
you, shall think that he doth God good Ser-  
vice. 2.

THUS did he wisely train them up to  
Suffering, and fit them for his own Busi-  
ness, by giving them this timely Notice to  
provide themselves of this needful Furni-  
ture of Constancy, and Patience; and to  
think themselves safe under the Protection  
of his Promise; or sure however at last to  
find their Lives again, in Glory and Im-  
mortality; should they be willing to sub-  
mit to temporal Death for his Sake. For  
these Things (says he) have I told you, that John xvi.  
when the Time shall come, ye may remember 4.  
that I told you of them. To the End, no  
Doubt, that by such Remembrance they  
might be equally convinced of his Vera-  
city and Power, and rest as much assured  
of that Support and Succour which he had  
formerly promised them, as they were of

SERM. the Reality of their own Sufferings; which

IX. he had so often forewarned them of.

Thus appointed, and thus fortified, he sent them forth, to plant and propagate his *Gospel* in the World; an Undertaking that must of Necessity engage them at once, against all the secular Interest, the Policy, the Power, the Rage of *Jew*, and *Gentile*.

AND how violent a Storm of malicious Opposition, and furious Persecution, this drew down upon their Heads, the whole History of their Acts doth witness; and *St. Paul* who was himself a deep Sharer in it, tells us, that *they were made a Spectacle unto the World, and to Angels and Men*; that

1 Cor. iv. they were accounted as the *Filth* and Off-  
9, &c. scouring of all Things. That they approved  
2 Cor. vi. themselves as the Ministers of God, in much  
4, &c. Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses, in Stripes and Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings; by Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report and good Report, as Deceivers and yet true; as dying and behold they lived; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as having nothing, and yet possessing all Things.

THU

## Of Christ's Sufferings.

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THIS was the Reception, that the first S E R M.  
Preachers of Christianity met with in the IX.  
World; and those who became Converts to  
them, were carefully instructed in the same  
Kind of Doctrine, and constantly inured  
to the same Discipline.

AND therefore we find the *Apostle* in the  
tenth Chapter of this Epistle to the *He-*  
*brews*, endeavouring to recall some that  
were drawing back to Perdition, and settle  
and strengthen them in the Faith; by re-  
minding them, how gallantly they had  
been used to behave themselves in their  
Christian Combat. *Call to Remembrance*  
(says he) *the former Times, in which after* Ver. 32,  
*ye were illuminated, ye endured a great* &c.  
*Fight of Afflictions; partly whilst ye were*  
*made a gazing Stock both by Reproaches,*  
*and Afflictions; and partly whilst ye became*  
*Companions of them that were so used. For*  
*ye had Compassion of me in my Bonds, and took*  
*joyfully the Spoiling of your Goods, knowing*  
*in yourselves that ye have in Heaven a bet-*  
*ter, and an enduring Substance. Cast not*  
*away therefore* (adds he) *your Confidence,*  
*which hath great Recompence of Reward.*  
*For ye have need of Patience, that after*

P 3

ye



SERM. *ye have done the Will of God, ye may receive*  
 IX. *the Promise.*

AND we have all of us, all that name the Name of *Christ*, and at all Times, very great Need of Patience. For though a State of Peril and Persecution, be the proper *Scene*, for the Exercise of that gallant Virtue; yet the Malice of wicked Spirits and wicked Men; and the Contrariety that there is between the Maxims of a sinful World, and the Principles of our holy Religion, will present a good Man with Opportunities enough, to try his Christian Patience. And therefore it is absolutely necessary, that we should be habitually furnished with it, and in constant Preparation of Mind to abide the severest Trial; lest if the *Captain of our Salvation, who was himself made perfect through Suffering*, should at any Time call us to suffer with him, we should prove Cowards and Deserters, instead of being his faithful Soldiers and Servants; of which also he forewarns us in most express'd Words. If any come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters; (that is supposing the

Luke xiv.  
26, &c.

## Of Christ's Sufferings.

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the Competition to lie between him and S E R M. them) yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple. And whosoever doth IX. not bear his Cross, (that is, when it is laid upon him by the Hand of Providence) and come after me, cannot be my Disciple.

It is upon these Terms therefore, that we are called to be Christians, nay that we are capable of being truly so: And it is by these Tokens, that we must approve ourselves sincere in what we profess, whenever we are required.

BUT then who is sufficient for all this? How can frail Flesh and Blood wrestle with such mighty Difficulties? How can Sense and Feeling be reconciled to Suffering? How can Fear be disciplined, till it become valiant? How can natural Affection be taught to forget itself, and silently to give Place to the Love of God? How can a living Man, and in his Health and Vigour, be persuaded to be out of Love with Life, and calmly and confidently chuse Death before it?

THESE are hard Sayings, how can they be born? And yet this, or something like it, though it is not *always*, yet it may at

SERM. any Time be the *Christian's* Lot. And  
 IX. therefore we have need of Patience,  
 and of a good Support to our Patience  
 too: We have need of a strong Consola-  
 tion proportionably to the Load laid upon  
 us, to keep our Spirits from Sinking under  
 it. We have need of Armour of Proof,  
 that we may be able to withstand in the  
 evil Day, and when we have done all to  
 stand. In a Word, we have need of all  
 possible Aids and Encouragements, to  
 strengthen the weak Hands, and confirm  
 the feeble Knees, that so we may be ena-  
 bled to fight the good Fight successfully,  
 and finish the toilsome Course with Safety  
 and Honour.

BUT blessed be God, even the *Father*  
*of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of*  
*Mercies, and God of all Comforts*, we are  
 not left comfortless or destitute, we are not  
 exposed naked and defenceless to insup-  
 portable Temptations. For as the Suffer-  
 ings of *Christ* abound in us, so our Conso-  
 lation also aboundeth by *Christ*. And we  
 are provided in my Text, with the most  
 sovereign Remedy, or Preservative against  
 all Impatience and Despondency, if we will,

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as we are directed, *consider him, that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself, lest we be wearied, and faint in our Minds.* SERM. IX.

For the unparallel'd Sufferings of our dear Redeemer, if justly estimated, and proportionably compared (which is the true Importance of the Word ἀναλογισαθε) with such as are common to other Men, must needs minister Abundance of Comfort, to any afflicted Soul, and effectually convince him, that his light Afflictions, are no more worthy to be compared with what *Christ* endured, than is the Sinner with his Saviour, or Man that is born of a Woman, with the only begotten Son of God.

AND that our Spirits may be refresh'd with this heavenly Cordial, and furnish'd with a Stock of Courage, and Patience against the Day of Trial, I shall now fall in closer with my Text. And

I. *First*, CONSIDER the Sufferer *Jesus Christ*, and his Sufferings. And then

II. *Secondly*, SHALL shew upon the Comparison, how slender the Proportion is betwixt



SER. M. betwixt him and us, his Sufferings and  
 IX. ours; and consequently how unreasonable,  
 indecent, and undutiful it is, to be impatient, or faint-hearted, when we are called to suffer for his Sake, or by his good Providence.

I. AND *First* let us consider the Sufferer and his Sufferings, consider him *that endured such Contradiction of Sinners*; what Manner of Man he was, and how much, and how unworthily he suffered.

AND as to his personal Qualifications, there are three at this Time, that will deserve more especially to be consider'd, his Innocence, his Greatness, and his Goodness.

AND *First*, as to his Innocence, Snow itself was not so white, nothing in the Earth could possibly be clearer; *he did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth*. So the Spirit had born Witness to him long before he was born, by *Isaiab* the Prophet; and his Life exactly verified the Prophecy; for even his most insidious Enemies, they that perpetually laid in Wait to catch him in his Words, and narrowly watch'd

watch'd all his Actions, with the sharp-S E R M.  
sighted Eye of Jealousy and Envy; they IX.  
could find nothing to lay hold on, but of-  
ten found themselves entangled in their  
own Net, and both disappointed, and con-  
founded at his Wisdom and Innocence.  
And therefore captious Questions laid a-  
side, they betook themselves to the grosser  
Methods of downwright Calumny, and  
bare-faced Lying: But unsuccessful still,  
though instructed by the Father of Lies.  
For he boldly made the Challenge; *which*  
*of you convinceth me of Sin?* But none of  
them had the Hardiness to undertake it.

AND when their Malice was at last en-  
raged to the Height, by being so often de-  
feated, and they were now resolved to dis-  
patch him at any Rate, they were forced  
to frame a feigned Accusation against him,  
and fasten it upon him by shameful Subor-  
nation. And this no easy Matter neither:  
For though many false Witnesses came,  
yet found they none; none (that is) that  
could speak home enough to the Purpose;  
excepting two, that had perverted and  
misrepresented some of his innocent Words.  
Whereupon the High Priest *adjured him by*  
*the*

SERM. *the living God, to tell whether he were the*

IX. *Christ the Son of God.* Which when he did not deny, it was taken *pro Confesso*, that he was an errant Blasphemer, and without once examining the Truth, or Reason of what he had said; it was the Vote of the Counsel, that he was guilty of Death. And yet when he was brought before *Pilate* the Roman Governor, he declared upon his Examination, that he *could find no Fault in him, touching those Things whereof they had accused him.* And when the *Jews* still persisted, and in a tumultuous Manner demanded him to be crucified; *Pilate*, tho' he suffered an unjust Sentence to be extorted from him, yet he took what Care he could to transfer the whole Blame upon them: For he washed his Hands before the whole Multitude saying; *I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person, see ye to it.* And yet *Barabbas* was released, and he was crucified; though never was Innocence more conspicuous, nor better attested than *his*; for as Malice calling in Perjury to its Aid, could make out nothing against him; so the unrighteous Judge that condemned him at last, was at the same

## Of Christ's Sufferings.

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same Time (when he did it) his own Accuser, and his Prisoners Compurgatour; so that when we come to enquire, how great his Sufferings were, we shall find them imbittered with this Aggravation; that he suffered in his Innocence, and indeed for it. For so says the Prophet, *He made his Grave with the Wicked, because he had done no Violence, neither was any Deceit in his Mouth.* But

SER M.  
IX.

Secondly, ANOTHER Thing considerable in his Person, was the Greatness and Dignity of it. For though he was a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*, yet he was none of those that might say unto *Corruption, thou art my Father; and to the Worm, thou art my Mother, and my Sister.*

No, he was of a much nobler Original, his very humane Nature was of divine Extraction; for so the Angel assured his modest Virgin Mother; and after he had told her, that she should conceive and bring forth a Son, he eased her of her Scruples about this Matter, by adding, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore*



SERM. *therefore also, that holy Thing that shall be*  
 IX. *born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

AND as he was conceiv'd and born in this miraculous Manner; so was he sanctified, and sent into the World with a most extraordinary Character, and upon a most important Embassy: He was ordained to be the *Christ*, the Saviour of the World, and to that End, he was anointed with an Unction from the Holy One, to be both King, and Priest, and Prophet; and as such he came with the most ample and honourable Credentials. This was he, of whom *Moses* in the Law, and all the *Prophets* did write; this was he who was own'd by a Voice from Heaven to be *the beloved Son of God, in whom he was well pleased*. This was he whose Works did bear witness to his Doctrine, and manifested both his Power and Wisdom to be divine; and made *his Glory to shine forth, as the Glory of the only begotten Son of the Father*. For he was more than an extraordinary Man; he was the natural and eternal Son of God, by ineffable Generation; he was the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person,

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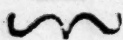
Person, and equal to him, without the SERM.  
Suspicion of Robbery, in all essential Per- IX.  
fections. So incomparably great and high  
was he, that *endured such Contradiction of*  
*Sinners against himself*: And so much the  
greater will the Indignity of his Sufferings  
appear, when once we come to examine  
them. In the mean while;

*Thirdly*, WE ought also to consider  
the marvellous Goodness, of this innocent  
and honourable Sufferer. And this was  
too eminent to be concealed: For he *went*  
*about doing Good*; he made it the whole  
Business, and indeed the Pleasure of his  
Life: It was his natural Refreshment as it  
were; *His Meat was to do the Will of his* John iv.  
*Father, and to finish his Work.* And he 34.  
was continually intent upon this very Thing,  
relieving the Sick from their bodily Infir-  
mities, and the Demoniacs from the Pos-  
session of the Devil, and still contriving to  
make his Miracles more beneficial, by  
mingling wholesome and heavenly Instru-  
ctions along with them, for the Recovery  
of their Souls Health. All this he did  
with the greatest Tenderness, and Com-  
passion, and Meekness, and Forbearance.

NOR

S E R M.

IX.



NOR would he suffer himself to be diverted from his kind Intentions, or from scattering his Benefits and Blessings round about him, notwithstanding all the Obstinacy and Perverseness, and Ingratitude of the Receivers; Notwithstanding that he was often maligned and vilified, often pelted with hard Words, sometimes with harder Stones, for doing an undeserved good Turn, to a froward and *gainsaying* People.

OF which though he had a just Resentment no Doubt, yet he express'd it no otherwise, as we find upon a remarkable Occasion, than by a gentle Upbraiding, that has a sweet Mixture of Kindness in it; *Many good Works says he, have I shewed you from my Father, for which of those Works do ye stone me?*

John x.  
32.

NEITHER could he content himself with the lesser Proofs of his Love; for his Love was stronger than Death; and the tender Concern he had for lost Mankind, was infinitely nearer and dearer to him, than that of his own Life. *He was the good Shepherd that chose to lay down his Life for his poor wandring Sheep, that they*

they might have Life, and that they might S E R M.  
have it more abundantly. And his Desire IX.  
seems to have been as earnest to lay down  
his Life, as the Malice of his most impla-  
cable Enemies could be eager to take it  
away from him; *I have a Baptism to be* Luke xii.  
*baptized with*, saith he (the Baptism of his 50.  
own Blood that is) *and now am I strait-*  
*ned till it be accomplished.* His Soul was  
in Travail (as it were) and he could not  
be at Ease till it was done. And with  
what Complacency and Satisfaction  
he meet, and embrace his approaching  
Death. *Father* (says he) *the Hour is come:* John xvii.  
*Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify* 1, 2.  
*thee: As thou hast given him Power over*  
*all Flesh, that he should give eternal Life to*  
*as many as thou hast given him.* That it  
seems, which made the Prospect of his  
Glory so much the more pleasing, and the  
Lustre of it, to appear so much the brighter  
to him, was; that he had been so happily  
instrumental, so effectually successful in the  
Salvation of Mankind.

AND therefore, as conscious of the great  
Things he had done in their Behalf; and  
how much what he had done would con-



S E R M. duce to his Father's Glory; he adds in a

IX. Sort of Joy, and Triumph, *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finish'd the Work which thou gavest me to do.* So that as he delighted all along in doing Good, so he rejoiced, and gloried as it were, to the last, that the Good which he had done had obtained its desired Effect. A wonderful and most amazing Instance of Goodness this, which must needs add to the Injuriousness of his Sufferings, and render the Authors, and Instruments of them, so much the more detestable and inexcusable.

AND now it will be Time to consider how much, and how unworthily he suffered, notwithstanding he was so very innocent, and truly great and good.

AND to make a due Estimation of the Greatness of his Sufferings, we must consider in the

*First PLACE*, that *this Contradiction of Sinners* which he is here said to *have endured*, is to be understood (as the Word itself also is used in Authors) not only of perverse and thwarting Language, but also of all kind of malicious and violent Opposition

position, in Actions, as well as Words; so SERM.  
that the *Contradiction of Sinners*, taken in IX.  
this Latitude, will include all the Cavil  
and Obloquy, the Infamy and Blasphemy,  
the Injury and Insolence, the Violence and  
Cruelty, that he suffered from unreasonable  
and wicked Men, from his first public  
Appearance, to his very Crucifixion.

ALL which, are briefly comprised in  
those two Expressions in the Verse fore-  
going; his *despising the Shame and enduring  
the Cross*, which was a most painful, as  
well as shameful Death. And in the Shame,  
and Pain, consists the very Sting of all his  
Sufferings. And that we may have the  
distincter View of these.

I. *First*, LET us consider the Shame,  
by which I mean all that Reproach and  
Scandal, all that vile and villainous Treat-  
ment, which he constantly met with, du-  
ring his whole Life, and was barbarously  
pursued with, to his very dying Moment.

AND this *Contradiction of Sinners*, he  
was so incessantly exercised with, that all  
the Demonstrations of his Innocence, the  
Credentials of his Mission, and Authority,  
the Proofs of his divine Power, and the

S E R M. Arguments of his humane Goodness, could  
 IX. not in the least abate his Enemy's Malice,  
 nor skreen him from Affronts and Indignities.

HIS Conversation was entirely innocent and irreproveable, and yet for his very Courtesy and Humility, was he branded as a *Glutton, and a Wine-Bibber, a Friend of Publicans, and Sinners.*

HIS Doctrine was sound and sober, grounded upon, and exactly correspondent to the former Revelation, and confirmed moreover by Miracles; nay his very Person, and Character, and Office were set forth in Types under the Law, and expressly foretold by the Prophets; and yet they rejected him, with the infamous Censure of a Deceiver, and a Perverter of the People. His Miracles were such as never Man did, and sufficiently bespoke the Majesty and Divinity of him, that wrought them. And yet was he accounted but a *Magician*, and absurdly, as well as blasphemously supposed to *cast out Devils*, by *Beelzebub the Prince of Devils.*

THUS was he confronted on all Occasions, with the most opprobrious Language,  
 and

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and the most contemptuous Usage. And S E R M.  
IX.  
when his inhumane Adversaries had it at last in their Power, to execute their Cruelty upon him; they still forgot not their wonted Insolence, but contrived to make his Death in the Manner of it, and all the Preparations to it as ignominious as 'twas cruel. He was apprehended as a *Thief* with *Swords* and *Staves*, and hall'd before the *Higb Priest*, and a Combination of *Scribes*, and *Elders*; and pronounced guilty at all Adventures; and then *spit upon*, and muffled, and *buffetted*, and insultingly put upon the Diversion of *Prophefying*, *who it was that smote him*.

THE Day after, he was led away bound to *Pilate*, and stood again in Scrutiny for his Life, together with a most notorious *Robber* and *Murderer*, who by the Voice of the People was preferred before him, and released; then was he *scourged*, a servile and disgraceful Punishment, that no Freeman was liable to; after that, he was *robed* in *Scarlet*, and had a *Crown of Thorns* put upon his Head, and a *Sceptre of Reed* into his Hand; and was derided with the mock Title, and the Homage of a King.

Q 3

Then



SERM. Then was he disrobed again, and led away  
 IX. to be crucified; a Death which none but  
 the vilest Malefactors suffered. Whilst  
 they were in the Way, on Purpose to insult him in his Misery, they offered him a distasteful Draught of *Vinegar mix'd with Gall*, to drink. And after all this Mockery and Outrage, they nailed him to the Cross, a Death which besides the common Ignominy that belonged to it, was in the Eye of the Law accounted execrable. Nor did they still cease to persecute him, with their Scorn and Derision; for not satisfied that their bloody Hands were employ'd in his Execution, they fed their barbarous Eyes with the sad Spectacle, and they *wagg'd their Heads at him*, and reviled him, as he was hanging upon the Cross; nay, they interrupted his very dying Prayers and his Groans, with their bitter Taunts, and rude Clamours.

AND thus the great, the good, and innocent *Jesus*, was even clothed and covered with Shame; for certainly never was spotless Innocence so basely aspersed, never was transcendent Goodness so unreasonably abused;

## Of Christ's Sufferings.

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bused; never was majestic Greatness, so S E R M.  
daringly and despitefully affronted. IX.

AND since nothing to an ingenuous Temper is so grievous as Contempt, nothing to a good Conscience, so injurious as undeserved Reproach; nothing to a great Mind, so provoking as Despite; questionless all these together must make a deep Impression, and add mightily to the Weight of our *Saviour's* Sufferings. But then

2. *Secondly*, If we consider how much they were sharpened by Pain, we still have a juster Sense of them; and indeed the Pain that he endured was excessively great, as well in Mind, as in Body. Meet him at his first Entrance into the Garden, which was the first Scene of his dolorous Passion, and there you will find him in an Agony, the Pangs of which were so intolerably sharp, that they forced a Shower of Sweat, through his Pores, *Sweat like great Drops of Blood, falling to the Ground.* There you will find him labouring under the afflicting Sense of present Evils, and the astonishing Apprehensions of more, and more grievous still to ensue; which he sufficiently expressed in the most significant,

Q 4

but

SERM. but still the most submissive Terms; My  
 IX. *Soul* (says he) is *exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death.* And the *Evangelists* tell us, that he was in great Anguish, that he was disturbed in Spirit, and sore amazed; and in this Bitterness of his Soul, he pray'd earnestly, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass away from me, nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done.* He pray'd not against his Death, but when he came to that, as *the Lamb before the Shearers is dumb; so he opened not his Mouth.* But these sad Preparations to Death, were more terrible than the King of Terrors. His Knowledge of the Wickedness and Wretchedness of Mankind, the moving, and the melting of his Bowels towards them; the amazing Prospect of God's Wrath, and Indignation against them; his own Share in it, and the Substitution of himself, to bear the Pressure, and Punishment of the Sins of a whole World. All these together, must needs afflict him beyond all Expression and Conception, and pierce his Soul deeper, than his Heart was by the Spear, and rack it more, than his Body by the Cross.

AND

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IX.

AND yet his Crucifixion was no Doubt, extremely painful. For not to insist upon what was immediately prelufory to it, the Furrows of the Whip upon his Back, and the piercing of the Thorns into his Temples; the nailing of his Hands and Feet (Parts fo very nervous) to the Crofs, and the Distention and Distorsion of his tender Limbs thereon, and the Continuance for above three long Hours in this Posture; I say, doubtless all this, in a Constitution fo nice and delicate as his; must be a most exquisite Torture; and that fo much the more Tormenting, because it did not dispatch him at once, but kept him fo long lingering, and sensibly dying, and feeling indeed the repeated Pains of several Deaths in one. And during this tedious Interval, to aggravate the Load of his Sorrows, the Powers of Darknefs were let loose against him, and the Influences of Heaven suspended or restrain'd for a while; inso-much, that he cry'd with a loud Voice, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Which bitter Cry of his, at once most emphatically expressed, how inconceivably great his Sufferings were for our Sake, and  
in



SERM. in what a deplorable Estate we had been left, unless he had stept in, to intercept the Fury of his Fathers Displeasure. And now putting together all these Circumstances, consider and behold: If ever there were Sorrow like unto his Sorrow! which was done unto him, and wherewith the Lord did afflict him in the Day of the Fierceness of his Wrath. And the most just and innocent, the most charitable, and the most merciful, the most divine and excellent Person, that ever lived in the World, voluntarily and cheerfully endured all this contumely, these Indignities, and Barbarities, these Agonies and Tortures, at the Hands of wretched Sinners, those very ungrateful Sinners, whom he came to save from eternal Death, by the precious Ransome of his own Life.

AND thus have I entertain'd your Meditations, with a full and open Prospect of the Sufferer, and his Sufferings. Which I shall close with that pious and pertinent Ejaculation of the *Greek Liturgies*; "thy unknown Labour, and Sufferings, and Torments, O *Christ* have Mercy  
" upon

upon us, and save us". I should now SERM.  
proceed, IX.



II. *Secondly*, To shew upon the Comparison, how slender the Proportion is, betwixt him and us, his Sufferings and ours. And consequently how unreasonable, how indecent, and how undutiful it is in us to be impatient or faint-hearted, when we are called to suffer for his Sake, or by his good Providence; but I am sensible though I have already spent the Time that should be bestowed upon this; yet I have this Advantage withal, that the Case is so plain, that any Body may make the Application. For if you would permit me to give you a few Hints; what I beseech you are we, even the best and greatest of us to him? And what our Sufferings, the worst the greatest of them to his? He was not only the best and most innocent of Men, adorned with the most amiable Graces and Virtues; but the only begotten Son of God, the Son of his Love, one in Nature with him, and his Equal in all essential Perfection. And yet he was content to be divested of his celestial Glory, and to put on the despicable

SERM. cable Rags of Mortality, to live an unsettled, distressed, despised, persecuted Life; and to die a horrid ignominious Death, and to be made a *Curse for us, that he might redeem us from the Curse of the Law.*

NOR did his Sufferings in some Sense terminate upon the Cross; for he submitted to have a Brand of Infamy stamp'd upon his sacred Name; and to become Matter of future Derision, both to the *Jewish* and *Heathen* Adversary, and to the Apostate Christian Scornor. Nay to this very Day is he pursued into the highest Heavens, with the most impertinent Cavils, perverse Disputings, bold Contradictions, horrible Blasphemies, and scandalous Actions of those, that are nominal Christians, but in Conversation, if not in Opinion, real *Infidels*.

THE Short of the Case is this; the Son of God that was made Man, and therefore may be allowed to be the greatest, the best, and most innocent Man, that ever lived upon Earth; he not content to humble himself, by putting on the Form of a Servant, suffered himself to be farther abased by the vilest of his Creatures, impudent and ungrateful Sinners; to be slanderously

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IX.

roushly traduced and vilified, to be scorn-  
fully rejected and despised, to be insolently  
derided and insulted, to be wrongfully ac-  
cused and condemned, and to be executed  
as the worst of Malefactors; nay, and af-  
ter he had distinguished himself by that  
unheard of Miracle, of rising from the  
Dead; to be branded for a wicked Im-  
postor, and to be violently opposed by all  
those Arguments, that Force or Fury are  
wont to administer, or Subtlety could fur-  
nish; and to be persecuted, and murdered  
ten thousand Times over in his Friends and  
Followers; and lastly to be still defamed,  
degraded, and even crucified afresh, by his  
pretended Friends and Followers; to have  
his Divinity disputed, or denied by impious  
*Hereticks*; or his Name usurped and pro-  
faned by very unsound *Believers*, such as  
make a graceless Profession of Christianity,  
but in their Works deny it, and in their  
Lives defy its holy Laws.

SUCH, so incomparably great and inno-  
cent, and good, was *he that endured such*  
*Contradiction of Sinners against himself.*  
And such, so inexpressibly great and grie-  
vous



SERM. VOUS were the Wrongs and Indignities  
IX. which he sustain'd.

AND alas! what are we? or what Worthiness is there in us, whereupon to form any Comparison between our Saviour, and ourselves? What possible Ground can we have of Complaint, if we have but Patience enough to compare our own Sufferings with his? For what are we? The richest, the noblest, the nicest, the finest among us; are we not all Dust and Ashes? The Offspring of Corruption, and Brethren to the very Worms of the Earth? Are we not all the Vassals and Subjects of God by Creation, the Property of *Christ* by Redemption, his Disciples and Servants by Profession? And are we not at the same Time the vilest of Sinners, Rebels, Apostates? And why then *should any living Man complain? A Man for the Punishment of his Sins.* Let him but consider whoever he is, that all temporal Punishment must needs fall short of his Deserts; far short of what *Christ* himself, that spotless Lamb, once suffered in his Stead; the Just for the Unjust. And yet he *like the Sheep before the Shearer was dumb,*

*dumb, and opened not his Mouth.* For this SERM.  
 sure must be sufficient, when well con- IX.  
 sidered, to silence all our Murmuring, and  
 Impatience, to calm and compose our Spi-  
 rits, and to teach us the great Duty of Re-  
 signation, and Submission to God's good  
 Hand; even under the severest of his  
 Judgments. The Ingenuity at least of the  
 Thief upon the Cross, would carry us  
 thus far to acknowledge; that we are  
 under *Condemnation*, and indeed justly, as  
*receiving the due Reward of our Deeds*; and  
 yet it must be acknowledged with all, that  
 the Load and Pressure of our Punishment,  
 is not a thousandth Part so heavy, as was  
 that, which was laid upon our dear Re-  
 deemer; who had done nothing amiss,  
 who *knew no Sin*; and yet his own self  
*bare our Sins in his own Body, on the Tree,*  
*and gave his Life a Ransome for many.*

AND shall we still think much to take  
 up our Cross, and follow *Christ*, that Cross  
 which we have justly deserved, that Cross  
 which is by all Manner of Titles our own?  
 Shall we think much to be Partakers of his  
 Sufferings, or grow weary and faint under  
 that Burden, which is much lighter upon  
 us,

SERM. us, than it was upon him, and which he  
 IX. himself, if we did but look up to him,  
 would even still support us under?

FOR Shame, let us not betray so much Cowardice, and Despondency; but let us revive our drooping Souls, by a serious Contemplation on our Saviour, and his Sufferings; a Contemplation that will afford Balsam enough, (if duly apply'd) to smoothe all our Passions, and heal the deepest Wounds, that any Affliction can give.

Is any Man in Poverty therefore? Let him consider, that the Son of God incarnate, even the Lord of the Universe, was once in the same Circumstances. And that Man must be unreasonably proud sure, who is ashamed of that Condition, in which *Christ* himself chose to appear, and as unreasonably discontented, who can think it a Hardship to fare as he did?

Is any Man wronged in Point of Reputation, or loaded with unjust Censure and Reproach? Let him consider, that the blessed *Jesus* himself, innocent and unblameable as he was, was represented as a *Wine-Bibber*, and a *Glutton*, a *Companion of Publicans*, and Harlots, a *Prophaner of*

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*the Sabbath, a Blasphemer of God, a De-* SERM.  
IX.  
*ceiver, a Magician, and what not? and*

that Man sure, if he has a good Conscience, must have a very mean Spirit, who cannot in an honest and a righteous Cause, stand the Shock of a little Censure, and be content to suffer Shame for *Christ's* Sake; who suffered so much, and so undeservedly for his.

If any Man be perplexed, and entangled through the Treachery of false Friends, or the Malice and Subtlety of insidious Enemies; let him consider, that the Saviour of the World, the best good Man that ever was, was beset by a parcel of vile Hypocrites, whose whole Business it was, to entrap him in his Talk, and either to find, or make Matter of Accusation against him; which they did at last, by perverting some of his innocent Words, but not till he was first betray'd into their Hands, by one of his own Disciples; as he was afterwards deserted by all, even in his last Extremity.

To conclude, is any Man afflicted, or distressed in his Estate, or his good Name, his Body or his Mind? Let him consider what mean Reception, and what coarse

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Treatment



SER M. Treatment, God's own beloved Son met  
 IX. with in the World; what Obloquy and  
 Ignominy he was exposed to, what Agonies of Soul, and what bodily Tortures he underwent, what Indignities and Barbarities he suffered. Let him consider, that the *Captain of our Salvation was himself made perfect through Sufferings, and that in Despight of Shame and the Cross, he is now set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God*; and that this is the Way, in which he trains up his truest Soldiers and Servants: This the Way, in which he tries their Sincerity, Courage and Constancy; this is the Way, in which he brings many Sons to Glory, and crowns all their Labours, and their Sorrows with everlasting Rest, and Peace, and Joy Triumphant. For such is his Favour, and he never calls us actually to take up the Cross, but he holds out the Crown at the same Time.

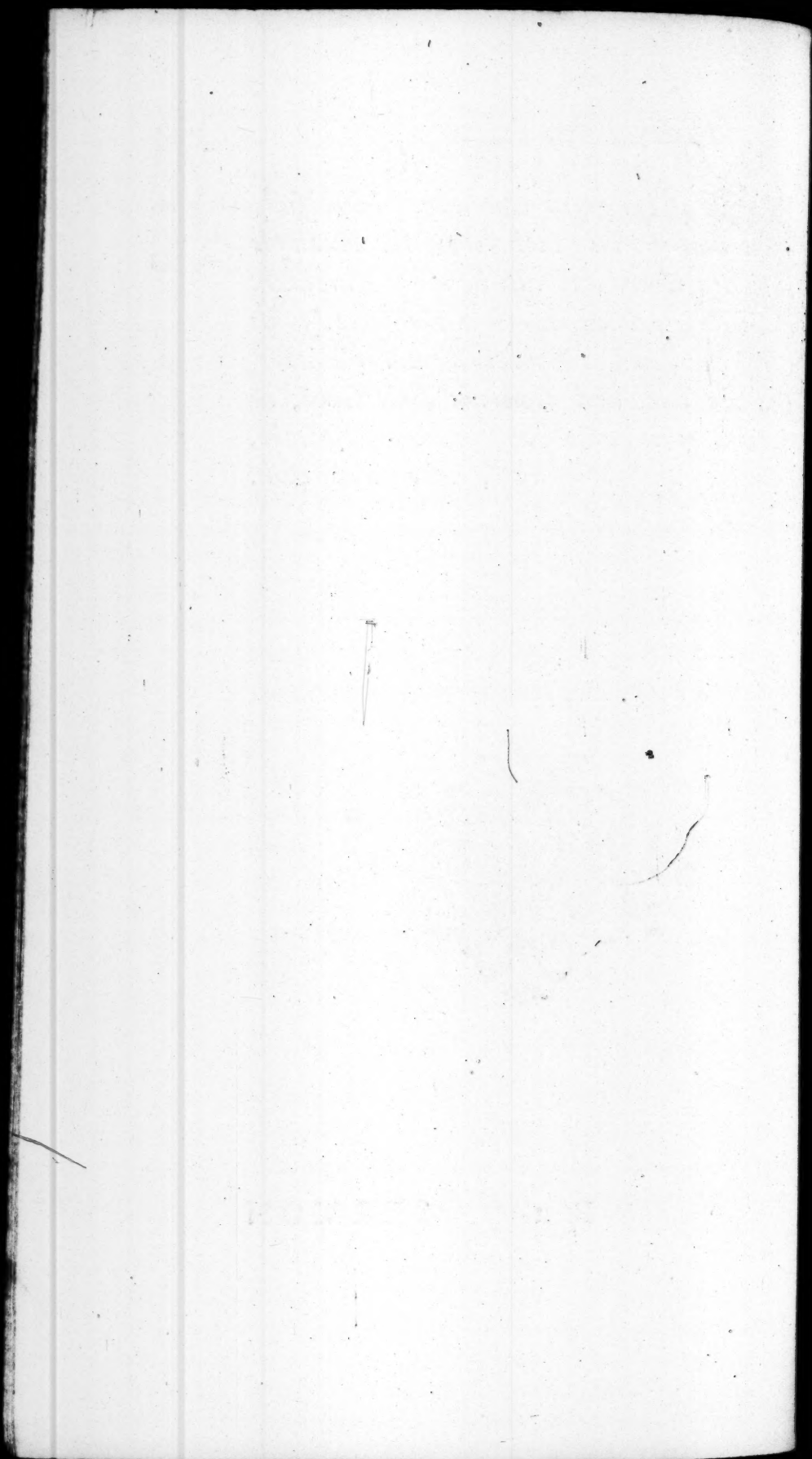
*Almighty and ever living God, who of thy tender Love towards Mankind, hast sent thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our Flesh, and to suffer Death upon the Cross, that all Mankind might follow the Example*

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*Example of his great Humility. Mercifully* SERM.  
*grant that we may both follow the Example* IX.  
*of his Patience, and also be made Partakers*  
*of his Resurrection, through the same Jesus*  
*Christ our Lord. Now to God the Father,*  
*God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be*  
*ascribed as is due all Praise, Glory, Might,*  
*Majesty, and Dominion, now and ever.*  
*Amen.*

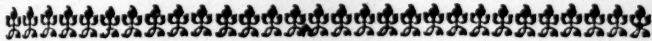






# S E R M O N X.

The Christian Triumph.



I COR. XV. 55, 56, 57.

*O Death where is thy Sting? O  
Grave where is thy Victory?*

*The Sting of Death is Sin; and the  
Strength of Sin is the Law.*

*But Thanks be to God, which giveth  
us the Victory, through our Lord  
Jesus Christ.*

R 3

THE



SERM.  
X.



THE Apostle begins this Chapter, with an Account of the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, which he shews to be as well attested, as it was possible for any Matter of Fact to be. And upon this Foundation, he proceeds to assert the general Resurrection; demonstrating not only the Possibility, but the Necessity, and Certainty and vast Importance of it; obviating such cavilling Objections against it, as might be apt to stagger the Weak; and lastly describing the Manner of it so far forth at least, as might be useful to raise the Hearts, and Hopes of his wavering Converts, with a Prospect of that incorruptible State of Glory and Immortality; in which, according to the Saying of the Prophet *Isaiah*,  
 II. xxv. 8. *Death shall be swallow'd up in Victory.* In Contemplation of which, (after having so well establish'd this fundamental of our Faith) St. *Paul* puts a Song of Triumph into the Christian's Mouth, in Memory of so notable and so noble a Conquest; which you have magnificently enough expressed in the Words of my Text, *O Death where*

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*where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory?* SERM.  
X.

AND that we may have the fuller View of this Christian Triumph, and bear our Part in it, and repeat this joyful Acclamation, *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory?* with Satisfaction to ourselves: I shall cast the two following Verses, naturally as they lie, into these four Propositions, viz.

I. *First, THAT the Sting of Death is Sin?*

II. *Secondly, THAT the Strength of Sin is the Law?*

III. *Thirdly, THAT God hath given us an entire Victory over Sin and Death, (the united Force of both) through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

IV. *Fourthly and lastly, THAT this is a just Matter of Thanksgiving to us.*

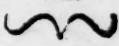
I. THE first Proposition is, *that the Sting of Death is Sin.* And this may be made out, from these three Reasons: *First*, because Sin first introduced Mortality into the World. *Secondly*, because it sharpens all

SERM. the Instruments and Arrows of Death, and  
 X. is perpetually hastening it on. *Thirdly*, because it greatly increases the Pains and Terrors of it, when Men come to die.

1. *First*, I say Sin introduced Mortality into the World, and therefore may justly be termed the *Sting of Death*, as being that which gave it its killing Power.

'Tis true, the Body of Man had no natural Principle of Immortality in its first Constitution: It was originally framed of corruptible Materials, and if it had been left to the Tendency of Nature, would, 'tis like, in Time have mouldered into the Dust, from whence it had its Original.

BUT God bestow'd that Excellency upon it, by his supernatural Grace, which from Nature it could not derive. And therefore the Tree of Life was planted ('tis believ'd) as the sacramental Pledge, and the Means of Immortality; what Virtue this Tree had, or whether any at all, to preserve Flesh and Blood eternally fresh and young, and vigorous; that we cannot certainly tell, any more than we know, whether there was any noxious Quality, in the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, that like a slow  
 Poyson,

Poyson, immediately corrupted the Fountain S E R M.  
of Life, and by Degrees at last, effected X.  
the Death of the presumptuous Tasters. 

BUT whatever becomes of Conjecture;  
this is certain from the sacred History; that  
this Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,  
was guarded with a strict Prohibition, and  
a peremptory Threatning; *Thou shalt not* Gen. ii.  
*eat of it, said God to Adam, for in the Day*<sup>17</sup>  
*thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

That is, according to the obvious and most  
immediate Sense of the Words, thou shalt  
become mortal. For after *Adam* had  
transgressed, and this Sentence was there-  
upon ratified by another of like Impor-  
tance; *Dust thou art, and to Dust shalt*  
*thou return*; we find notwithstanding, that  
he survived it some hundreds of Years, and  
begat Sons and Daughters.

BUT he died at last; and then was this  
Penalty actually inflicted upon him, to  
which he had laid liable, ever from his  
first Transgression. For from that Time  
had he forfeited that conditional Title to  
Immortality, which God had given him,  
and became Subject to that Mortality,  
which at length put a Period to his Life,  
and



SERM. and dissolved him into Dust again.

AND *Adam* being at that Time, the Representative of the whole Race of Mankind, who were afterwards to spring from his Loins; they also were included in the same Forfeiture. By his single Default, they were deprived of Immortality; as by his single Obedience (had he performed the federal Condition) they would have been for ever indefeibly entitled to it.

THE Forfeiture therefore was equitable, and indeed in the Course of Nature unavoidable; For *Adam* having once lost the supernatural Privilege, which was his Preservative against Death; he was at the same Time left exposed to all Manner of Infirmities and Disorders, and to the final Dissolution, to which such a frail Composition, as is the humane Body, would naturally tend. And therefore it was naturally impossible in the State he was now reduced to; that he should propagate a Race of Men immortal: For a natural Effect can rise no higher than its Cause, and therefore he that was himself mortal and infirm, must needs when left to himself, beget an Offspring of his own Likeness,

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ness, of the like unequal *Crafts*, with the SERM.  
like discordant Humours, with the like X.  
disorderly Passions, and every Way subject  
to the like Distempers from within, as  
well as Violence from without, as their  
unhappy Parent was; and thus (without  
the second Intervention of Power superna-  
tural, which there is no Ground to sup-  
pose) must the Seeds of natural Diseases  
and Death, be necessarily transmitted to all  
the Posterity of *Adam*.

AND that this may not pass for mere  
Speculation; (the Main I mean of what  
has been asserted concerning the Entrance  
of Death into the World by Sin) we have  
plain Scripture Authority to support it. It  
is sufficiently intimated in this very Chap-  
ter, *That by Man came Death, and that in  
Adam all die.* And how he came to die, Ver. 22,  
and others through him; is more fully ex-<sup>23</sup>  
plain'd in the 5<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Epistle  
to the *Romans*, the 12<sup>th</sup>, and following  
Verses. *Wherefore by one Man, Sin entred  
into the World; i. e. by Adam, and Death  
by Sin, i. e. the Death of him, and  
his Posterity. For it follows; And so  
Death passed upon all Men, for that (or  
rather*

SER M. rather perhaps as it is rendred in the Margin) *in whom, all have sinned, to wit in Adam.* For by the Tenor of that equal Covenant which God made with him, the Imputation of Righteousness, and the Reward of it, (if he had persevered in it) had appertain'd to his Posterity; and by the same Reason, the Imputation of his Sin, and the Penalty is laid upon them also.

FOR as the next Words are, *until the Law, Sin was in the World; but Sin is not imputed, where there is no Law, nevertheless Death reigned, from Adam unto Moses, even over them, who had not sinned according to Adam's Transgression.*

THE most probable Meaning of which, is this; that whereas Death had erected its Empire before the Law of *Moses*, and consequently could not be a Punishment for the Breach of a Law, as yet not in Being; it must follow, that it was first inflicted for *Adam's Transgression*, and that (for the Reasons afore given) his whole Posterity was involved in the same Sentence; although some of them never perhaps transgressed any positive Law, that was threatned with Death. But in him as  
their

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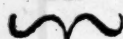
their common Representative, they all sin- SERM.  
ned, and therefore in him, they all die. X.

BUT whatever Difference may arise, concerning the Manner of the Propagation of Death through Sin, the Scripture you see is express, that Sin was the first Introducer of it. And in this Respect, the Apostle (not unelegantly) calls it the *Sting of Death*; because as the Venom of some noxious Animals, is supposed to lie in their Sting, so the very Fatality of Death is derived from Sin. But

2. *Secondly*, SIN may also be called the *Sting of Death*; because 'tis perpetually sharpening its Instruments and Arrows, and many Ways hastening it on. 'Tis but natural, (as has been before observed) for a crazy mortal Father, to beget a Son subject to the like Infirmary, and Mortality. And 'tis by no Means improbable, that the Seeds of moral Corruption, such as are the Inordinacy of the Appetites, and the Unruliness of the Passions, may in like Manner be transmitted and propagated. But however that may be, 'tis too notorious, that the Appetites and Passions of lapsed Mankind, are very inordinate and unruly  
and



SERM. and the effects of them, are often very fatal to their very Health, and Life. Anger, and Envy, and Malice, and Revenge, do frequently begin such furious Quarrels as end in Blood-shed.

X.  


INTEMPERATE Eating and Drinking, are the known Causes of Fevers, and Surfeits, and Dropsies. Unbridled Lust is the fruitful Parent of Aches, and Consumptions, and Rottenness. And infinite Ways there are besides, of offering Violence to our mortal Nature; and helping to pull down that tottering Fabrick, which is always a mouldring of itself. If Men had continued in a State of Innocence, they would never have destroyed their own Lives by Violence, and Murder, by Gluttony or Drunkenness, or any Kind of vitious Excesses.

BUT when Sin once found its Entrance into the World, these, and a vast Troop of Mischiefs besides, rushed in with it, as if it had been to do the Work of Death more effectually, or at least more expeditiously. God pronounced the Sentence against *Adam*, upon his first Transgression. And the Sons of *Adam* ever since that Time, have been

been fatally industrious by their own actual S E R M.  
Sins, not only to demonstrate the Justice X.  
of the Sentence, but also to see it put in  
Execution, as speedily as might be; nay  
rather than fail, to execute it upon them-  
selves. And in this Respect, Sin therefore  
may well be called the *Sting of Death*, in  
that it makes it in a Manner more deadly,  
than it would be of itself; and not content  
to suffer it to be the Work of Time, or to  
leave it to the gentler Decays of Nature;  
it precipitates the very natural Causes of  
it, or else urges it on, by other more hasty  
and violent Methods. But

3. *Thirdly*, SIN is deservedly accounted  
the *Sting of Death*, in that it greatly in-  
creases the Pangs and Terrors of it, when  
Men come to die. If there were nothing  
in Death but just Dying, the natural Aver-  
sion which most Men have to it, would  
not perhaps carry all that Horror with it,  
that it generally does; nor would its Ap-  
proach be so very shocking and terrible, as  
to our sinful Nature it commonly is; but  
here lies the Misery; when Men seriously  
think of Death, or see it actually hastening  
towards them, they cannot (were they to  
save

SER. M. save their very Lives by it) terminate their

X. Thoughts just there. Strange Suspensions, and boding Presages will arise in their Minds, and give them dreadful Apprehensions of a future State of just Retribution; and the wakeful Sense of Guilt will convince them at the same Time, that (if such a State there be) they for their Part do deserve, and must expect to be severely punished. Such misgiving Fears, when Death shews his *grim* Face, will be apt to seize or shake the most careless, or dissolute, nay even the most unthinking or unbelieving. But as for those Sinners, who have any Acquaintance with the Word of God, they (unhappy Wretches) believe, they cannot doubt (would they never so fain) but as *'tis appointed for Men once to die*; so Judgment will as certainly ensue.

AND this arms Death itself with new Terrors; this awakens their guilty Consciences with a Witness; this gives them an amazing Prospect of the Righteous Judge, and his awful Tribunal, of the Lakes of Brimstone, and everlasting Burnings; and to their unspeakable Confusion, forces them sometimes, to anticipate their  
final

final Doom, by their present Despair; and therefore Sin deserves to be accounted the *Sting of Death*, that makes dying Men, at the same Time, begin to feel the grievous, and insufferable Sting of the *never dying Worm*. And so much for the Proof of the first Proposition, *that the Sting of Death is Sin*.

S E R M.  
X.

II. THE *Second* follows, that *the Strength of Sin is the Law*; which possibly may be understood, either of the Law given to *Adam*, concerning the *Fruit of the Tree*, of which he was forbidden to eat; Or

*Secondly*, OF the Law given to *Moses*; Or

*Thirdly*, OF the Law of God taken in a more general, and indefinite Sense, for his complete Will. And

*First*, IF we understand it, of the Law which was originally given to *Adam*, 'tis plain that Law consisted of a Prohibition, and a Threatning: And upon the Infringement of that Prohibition, the Threatning denounced, was to take Place, and be executed upon the Transgressor; and so accordingly it was, in the Death of *Adam*, and his Posterity after him. If Death had



SERM. not been the Penalty annexed to the Violation of the Law, *Adam* might have sinned, and yet not have died. It is according to the Tenor of this Law, that Death was brought into the World by Sin, and in that Regard, the *Law* is said to be the *Strength of Sin*, to wit that Sin, by which *Adam* fell.

Secondly, If we understand it of the Law of *Moses*, 'tis probable, St. *Paul* might design to obviate the Mistake of any Jew, or *Judaizing Christian*, who should be so vain, as to imagine that there was a sufficient Remedy provided against Death, and Sin, the Cause of Death, under that Dispensation.

Rom. v.  
20.

WHICH our *Apostle* is so far from allowing to be true, that we find him elsewhere, positively asserting and proving, that it gives Encrease and additional Strength to it. He says expressly, *The Law entred, that Sin might abound*: For in the Event so it proved, though it was far enough from the Intention of the Lawgiver.

AND how it came to be so perverted and misapplied, you may find an Account in the seventh Chapter to the *Romans*; where

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S E R M.

X.

Ver. 7, &c.

where he tells us in his own Person, as being formerly a Pharisee; *I had not known Sin but by the Law; for I had not known Lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But Sin taking Occasion by the Commandment, wrought in me all Manner of Concupiscence. For without the Law Sin was dead; and the Commandment which was ordain'd for Life, I found to be unto Death unto me. Was then that which is good made Death unto me? God forbid! But Sin that it might appear Sin, working Death in me by that which is good; that Sin by the Commandment might become exceeding sinful.* The plain Scope of which Passages, if ye take them together is this; that Sin receiv'd very great Augmentation from the Law of Moses, partly by Reason of the Precepts and Prohibitions, therein superadded to the Law of Nature, and the evil Concupiscence thereby fomented and inflamed; and partly by Reason of the greater Contempt incurred in offending against a known Law, and the manifest Conviction thence arising. And this must necessarily leave a grievous Terror upon the Mind of the Offender, because it must be evident to him, that by

S 2

the

S E R M. the Law, no Man could be justified in the  
 X. Sight of God, both for want of Ability to  
 perform an exact Obedience to it; and for  
 want of a legal Expiation, for wilful and  
 presumptuous Transgressions. It appears  
 therefore, that the Law of *Moses* was so far  
 from being able to release the Sinner from  
 the Penalty of Death, or the Power of Sin;  
 that it gave them but the faster Hold of  
 him. And in this Sense, the Words of  
 our Apostle, would hold good, *that the*  
*Strength of Sin is the Law.* But

*Thirdly*, If we understand it in a larger  
 and more indefinite Sense, for the Will of  
 God, gradually manifested to Mankind;  
 and at last compleatly revealed under the  
 Evangelical Dispensation; the Law of God  
 in this Sense consists as all Laws do, of two  
 Parts, the *Directive*, and *Vindictive*; which  
 also infer a double Obligation. The *Di-*  
*rective*, as being the Rule and Measure of  
 our Actions, obliges to Obedience; which  
 when once infringed, the *Vindictive*, which  
 is a Kind of Fence to the moral Part of  
 the Law, obliges to Punishment. And this  
 Punishment, 'tis the Wisdom of the Law-  
 giver to proportion to the End designed,  
 which

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which is to force the Obedience of the Subject, and to secure the Law from Contempt; and to that End, the sacred Law of God, is guarded by a Sanction of everlasting Punishment.

S E R M.  
X.  


AND whereas, the immediate Penalty allotted to the Sin of our first Parents, was temporal Death; God's subsequent Law, even that which is Evangelical, simply taken, admits of no Release from that Penalty, nor does it loosen the Obligation to it; so far from that, that it rather strengthens it, and extends it still farther, even to the suffering of Death eternal. The Law therefore in this Sense also, is the Strength of Sin, as having the severest Sanction, and inferring the deepest Guilt, and consequently the strongest Obligation to Punishment; from which 'tis impossible to get free, without having Recourse to the Merits and Mediation of a *Saviour*, and his Influence and Assistance. Which brings me in good Time, to my third Proposition. Namely,

III. *Thirdly*, THAT God hath given us an entire *Victory*, over the united Forces of



SERM. Sin and Death, *through our Lord Jesus*  
 X. *Christ.* And that

*First*, BECAUSE our Lord Jesus Christ hath disarmed Sin of all that Strength which it borrow'd from the Law; for he performed a most exact and uniform Obedience to the Law, in every Point and Title of it: He *fulfilled* all Manner of legal Righteousness, both *ritual* and *moral*; and therefore he discharged the Obligation of the *directive* Part of the Law in its utmost Extent and Latitude: And he fully answered the Obligation of the *vindictive* Part too, by laying down his innocent, exemplary, holy and heavenly Life, and becoming obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, that he might make full Satisfaction (not for his own Sins, for he knew none; but) for the Sins of the whole World. And the infinite Dignity of his Person, as being the Son of God incarnate, made his Obedience both active and passive, of infinite Value and Virtue, in the Sight of God. By the Merits of his passive Obedience, or his Sufferings, he purchased for Sinners a Release from the Penalty of the Law, which is Death; and by the Merit of his active

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active Obedience, he entitled them to the S E R M.  
Reward of it, and that, a Reward exceeding X.  
great, beyond all Proportion; not barely  
a Restoration to Life, but to a Life immortal, and glorious in the Heavens. All these comfortable Truths are delivered in Scripture, in Words so very pregnant, that I must not rob you of the Satisfaction of hearing some of them. To this Purpose expressly are those of St. Paul to the Galatians, *That God sent forth his Son made of* Gal. iv. 4, &c.  
*a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* And to what good Effect this was, he himself informs us, namely; that *God who raised him from* Coloss. ii. 12, 13, 14, 15.  
*the Dead, hath together with him, quickened us that were dead in our Sins, having forgiven us all Trespases, and blotted out the Hand-writing of the Ordinances that was against us, and taken it out of the Way, and nailed it to his Cross; and having spoiled Principalities and Powers; and made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.* And that this was our sufficient Justification, appears from what he says upon this Head, in the 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter to the  
S 4 *Romans,*

SER M. *Romans*, the 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Verses: That be-  
 X. cause of the Insufficiency of the Law to  
 ~~~~~ that End, *God sent his own Son in the Like-  
 ness of sinful Flesh*, and by a Sacrifice for
 Sin, *condemned Sin in the Flesh*; that the
*Righteousness of the Law, might be fulfilled
 in us*; upon Condition, that is, *that we
 walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.*
 And that this is counted unto us for Right-
 eousness, is farther cleared, from what oc-
 curs in the 5th Chapter, the 19th Verse;
 that *as by one Man's Disobedience, many
 were made Sinners*; so by the Obedience of
 one, *shall many be made righteous.* And
 that this Righteousness is available, not on-
 ly to redeem us from Death, but to instate
 us in Life and Glory, is most evident from
 the Words a little before, in the 17th Verse;
 that *if by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by
 one*; much more they which receive Abundance
 of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness,
shall reign in Life by one Jesus Christ.

IN the Upshot therefore we may con-
 clude, that we are thus far set at Liberty,
 and put into a victorious Posture, by the
 Grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;
 in that through Death, he hath destroyed him

who

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who had the Power of Death, that is the SERM.
Devil; and deliver'd us, who through the X.
Fear of Death, were before subject to Bondage, and enabled us to wait with well grounded Hope for the Adoption; to wit, *the Redemption of our Body.* But

Secondly, - As our blessed Saviour, has already atchieved this noble Victory, in his own Person; so he has made a public Triumph over the Grave and Hell, by his miraculous Resurrection from the Dead. He has thereby given us, a joyful Assurance, that we also in due Time shall be more than Conquerors, through him that loved us. For he *was delivered* (our Apostle tells us) *for our Offences, and was raised again for our Justification*; to give us a sensible Demonstration; that is, that the Sacrifice which he had offered upon the Cross, was accepted at God's Hand, in full Satisfaction for our Sins; and that we are thereby most graciously absolved and justified, and shall hereafter also be glorified with him. And hereby we are begotten unto a lively Hope, not only of a Release from Death (the Penalty of Sin) but also of an *Inheritance incorruptible and unde-* 1 Pet. i.
filed, 4 5.

SERM filed, and that fadeth not away; reserved in
 X. the Heavens for us, who are kept by the
 Power of God through Faith, unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last Time.
 'Tis such a remarkable Omnipotence this, as must convince us of the Truth of what he said of himself, whilst he lived upon
 John x. 18. Earth, viz. that he, and he alone had Power to lay down his Life, and that he had Power to take it again.

THIS must be abundantly sufficient to confirm us, in the Belief that we also shall live with him; knowing (even from this Demonstration of his Almighty Power) that *Christ being raised from the Dead, dieth no more; Death hath no more Dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto Sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

IN his humane Nature, he had once for all, offered up an All-attoning Sacrifice for Sin, that needed not to be repeated; and therefore now he resumed a Life purely divine, and worthy of his eternal Godhead. And for our Consolation, the *Apostle* adds in the Verse following: *Reckon therefore yourselves likewise dead unto Sin, but alive*

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live unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and that nothing might be wanting to give us a firm and confident Expectation, that we also at last shall be victorious, and triumphant over Death as he is; it is most expressly and emphatically declared in this very Chapter; that Christ is Ver. 20, not only risen from the Dead, but become the &c. first Fruits of them that slept; that since by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead; that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; that the first Adam was made a living Soul, that the last Adam was made a quickning Spirit; that the first Man is of the Earth earthy, that the second Man is the Lord from Heaven; that as we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly. That this Corruptible must put on Incorruption, and this Mortal must put on Immortality: And lastly, that when this Corruptible shall have put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall have put on Immortality; then shall be brought to pass, the Saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory. And surely, upon the Strength of such plain Scripture

SERM.
X.

SERM. Scripture Evidence; every good *Christian*,
 X. may lawfully anticipate that joyful Day,
 and sing St. *Paul's* Epinikion.

O Death, where is thy Sting? O Graves, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but Thanks be to God, who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. For certainly so glorious a Deliverance as this, as I shall now briefly shew in the fourth Place; namely,

IV. *Fourthly*, Is just Matter of Thank-giving to us. Now there are these Considerations more especially, that raise the Price of any Kindness, and proportionably increase the Obligations of Gratitude to our Benefactors.

First, THE Needfulness of the Benefit bestow'd. *Secondly*, The good Will of him that bestows it. *Thirdly*, The intrinsic Value of it, and the great Advantage accruing to the Receiver.

ALL which Circumstances do eminently concur to magnify the abundant Riches of God's Grace, in giving us the Victory, over Sin and Death, *through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 And *First*,

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First, THE Needfulness of the Benefit S E R M.
bestow'd; which was in Truth so absolutely X.
necessary, that we must have perished ever-
lastingly without it. For all Mankind had
sinned, and *were thereby come short of the*
Glory of God; deprived, *i. e.* of that Im-
mortality, which God had originally de-
signed, as the glorious Reward of their In-
tegrity and Obedience. Upon the Sin of
Adam, he, and all his whole Race were
sentenced to die, which every Man since,
has doubly deserved by his own actual
Transgressions: And therefore the Sanction
of the Law was in full Force against them
all: And, alas, wretched Men that they
were, *who*, or what *could deliver them from*
this Body of Death? Was any legal Expiation
sufficient for the Purpose? No! it was im-
possible, *that the Blood of Bulls, and Goats,*
should take away Sin; and the Law was in-
deed the very Strength of Sin to condemn
them; so far was it from being intended
with any saving Power to redeem them.

COULD they hope for Help then, from
any of their own Kind? No! not though
they had been willing *to give their first*
Born for their Transgressions, the Fruit of
their

S E R M. *their Bodies, for the Sin of their Souls.* For

X. Sinners they all were, and therefore unless
 Sin were the proper Atonement of Sin
 (which is of all Absurdities the greatest)
 it was impossible a Sinner should be the
 Redeemer of Sinners.

BUT were not the *Angels*, who excel in
 Strength, able to atchieve the Redemption of
 sinful Man? No! they were unable to re-
 lieve their very Fellows; who, from the
 Time they left their own Habitations, *have*
been reserved in everlasting Chains, never
 more to be released.

IN short, so precious was the Redemp-
 tion of Souls, that it was not in the Power
 of any mere Creature, to pay so vast a
 Ransom. *For such an High Priest* (as says
 the Apostle) became us, (*i. e.* in our lap-
 sed and sinful Estate was needful for us)
who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate
from Sinners, and made *higher than the*
Heavens, *i. e.* more exalted in Nature
 and Condition, than any created Being
 whatsoever. And to this End, did *Christ*
 (as the only Person so divinely qualified)
appear once in the End of the World, to put
away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself; the
 Dignity

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Dignity and Divinity of whose Person (as SERM. X. being the Son of God incarnate) made his Obedience unto Death, meritorious enough to satisfy for a whole World of Sinners, and to *deliver them from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God.*

IN this Respect therefore, Sinners are infinitely indebted to the great Preserver of Men; that in the Extremity of their Distress, when there was no Help for them in themselves, nor in any Creature besides, he should send them Help from his holy Place, and so signally deliver their Souls from the Power of the Grave. And *Thanks be to God, who has given us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* For we are certainly under all imaginable Obligations of Gratitude to him, if we consider;

Secondly, THE singular Goodness of our heavenly Benefactor; which surprisingly discovers itself, partly in the early Intimation of this his intended Favour, and partly in the extraordinary Method of communicating it to us.

FOR it is particularly observable; that before God pronounced that peremptory Sentence

S E R M. Sentence against *Adam*; *Dust thou art, and*
 X. *to Dust shalt thou return*; which brought
 him under a Necessity of Dying; it is particularly observable, I say, that before this, he had expressly promised, *That the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head*; i. e. that the *Messiah* should, through Death, destroy him, that had the Power of Death, even the Devil; and so far divest him of his capital Strength, that all true Believers, even though they were dead, yet shall they live; i. e. be restored to Life again, never to die. A marvellous Instance this, of the loving Kindness of the Lord; which
 Gen. iii. 14. (as the Psalmist says) is better than Life; that before he would suffer himself, with the Severity of a Judge, to give Sentence of Death against his rebellious Creatures; he should put on the Bowels of a Redeemer, and graciously assure him, by his own sacred Promise, of a happy Deliverance at last, from that very Punishment, which he had wilfully incurred; and the divine Justice could not but inflict.

AND that, which makes this Wonder of Love, more ravishingly wonderful, is the extraordinary Provision, that God in his infinite

infinite Wisdom had made, even before the Foundations of the World, or the Redemption of Mankind, by the Incarnation, to wit, and Death of his only begotten Son. For *In this, says St. John, was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him, even though we had been justly condemned to die; and herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son, to be the Propitiation for our Sins.*

S E R M
X.

Ep. iv. 9.

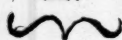
Ver. 10.

AND that God should not so much as spare his own Son, his dearly beloved Son, but freely deliver him up for his very Enemies; and that he should engage himself by Promise, so to do from the Beginning; this bespeaks so much Goodness, and such a Propension to do us good, and such an indulgent Care, and Tendernefs, and Compassion for us; as no Admiration can ever come up to, no Expressions of Gratitude sufficiently set forth. But still it appears to be a Debt, that we are obliged to be always a paying, though we can never thoroughly discharge it; and therefore *Thanks be to God, who has given us the*
VOL. I. T Victory,

SER M. *Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

X.

For



Thirdly, THERE is another Enhancement to our Obligations of being thankful; and that is the intrinsic Value of the Benefit receiv'd, and the Advantage thence accruing to the Receiver.

BUT here all Calculation must needs fall short: For 'tis impossible in this imperfect State, perfectly to comprehend; *what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of God's Love in Christ*, which passeth all Knowledge. But though we have no Ideas commensurate to the excessive Degree of the divine Love, nor to the inestimable Price of the Benefit, of which we are made Partakers thereby; yet the Advantage thence accruing to us, is so visible and remarkable, that it cannot be past over, without our most grateful Acknowledgments.

FOR 'tis evident, that *Adam's* Fall was our Rise and Improvement. *Adam* in his Innocence, was placed in an earthly Paradise, with a Body of Flesh and Blood, in Nature mortal, but by supernatural Grace fitted for Immortality.

THIS

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THIS Immortality, by Sin he forfeited, S E R M.
and he, and all his Posterity from thence- X.
forth, became a Prey to the Grave, and
Corruption. But *Christ* has ransomed us
from Death, and will raise us again at the
last Day; not with such earthly and cor-
ruptible Bodies as these, we now wear;
but with *spiritual* and *celestial* Bodies, re-
fined from all the Dregs of Mortality, and
built for perpetual Duration, and Happi-
ness, and Glory.

So that we shall be infinite Gainers by
Adam's Loss; insomuch as the Efficacy of
God's free Grace is greater to save, than
the Power of Sin was to destroy; which
the Apostle very handsomely represents in
that Passage to the *Romans*: That *if by one* Rom. v.
*Man's Offence, Death reigned by one; much*¹⁷
more they who receive Abundance of Grace,
and of the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign
in Life by one Jesus Christ. Such is the
Exuberancy of God's Grace, that we shall
not only be released from Death, but shall
even reign in Life; a Life much more
happy, and glorious, and unchangeable,
than that we forfeited in *Adam*: For *the*
Gift of God is eternal Life.

T 2

AND

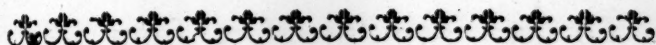
SERM. AND therefore we have abundant Reason to give Thanks to God, *who has given us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and has not only delivered us from the Power of Darkness; but also translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, and made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* Which God of his infinite Mercy grant we may all obtain, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ: To whom with the Father, and holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is due, all Praise, Glory, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now, and for evermore. *Amen.*





S E R M O N XI.

Of *Christ's* Resurrection.



I COR. XV. 58.

Therefore, my beloved Brethren,
be ye stedfast, unmoveable, al-
ways abounding in the Work of
the Lord; forasmuch as ye know,
that your Labour is not in Vain
in the Lord.

T 3

St. Paul

SERM.
XI.



T. Paul, in this Chapter, takes a great deal of excellent Care, and Pains to establish the Faith of his *Corinthian* Converts, and to

guard their Innocence against the sly (but false) Insinuations of some early *Heretics*; who, (it should seem) had half persuaded them, either to doubt of the very Possibility of a Resurrection to come, or else in resolving the whole Thing into *Mystery*, and *Allegory*, to take it for granted, that it was already past.

To keep them therefore from falling into such pernicious Errors, and from drawing back unto Perdition, after they had been once illuminated; he again, declares the *Gospel* to them, in its naked Simplicity; and upon the same Foot that he had first deliver'd it, and they also embraced it.

AND he begins with the great Fundamental of all, the Death, and Resurrection of our *Lord Jesus Christ*. The latter of which, as being the true Basis of the Matter in Question, he confirms, from the ocular

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lar Testimony of the whole College of *Apostles*, (himself also being added to the Number) and from the concurring Evidence of above five hundred Brethren besides; of whom the greater Part were still alive to testify, upon Occasion, what they had seen.

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~

AND upon this grand Matter of Fact, thus related and asserted; he proceeds to argue with great Strength, and Clearness, and shews the vast Importance of the Resurrection of *Christ*; as being the main Support of our Faith, and the best Proof of the Efficacy of that Redemption, which he wrought for us; and withal, the sure Pledge of the general Resurrection of the Dead, and thereby the chief Stay of our present Comfort; as well as the Earnest of our future Happiness.

HAVING therefore, upon these Grounds, demonstrated not only the Possibility, but the Certainty, and Necessity of a Resurrection to come; he spends the Sequel of the Chapter, partly in obviating such cavilling Objections against it, as might be apt to stagger those that were already weak and wavering; and partly in accounting for

S E R M. the Manner of it, and the Quality of that
 XI. Body, with which Men shall be cloathed
 at the last Day; so far forth at least, as
 might be useful to raise their Hearts and
 Hopes, with the Prospect of that incor-
 ruptible State of Glory and Immortality, in
 which *Death shall be swallowed up in Vi-
 ctory.*

Ver. 55,
 56, 57.

AND being advanced by these Degrees, to this Pitch of Elevation; he expresses his own unshaken Assurance, in an Exclamation of Triumph, in which every good Christian may safely join, *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin; and the Strength of Sin is the Law. But Thanks be to God, who hath given us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

AND the Apostle, after he had thus secured the main Point, against all Gainsayers and Opposers; closes up the whole Argument with this pertinent Exhortation of the Text. *Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know your Labour is not in Vain in the Lord.*

AND

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AND this Exhortation, is fairly deduced, and justly inferred from the foregoing Discourse. For if the Resurrection of our Saviour *Christ* be itself a Matter of Fact, that is unexceptionably well attested: And if that once admitted, be also an unexceptionable Proof, of the Truth of the Christian Religion in general, and of the Resurrection of the Just in Particular: Then 'tis plain, that our Faith is as well grounded, and our Hope as well supported as 'tis possible, and consequently, that 'tis our Duty to be stedfast in it, and constant to it.

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AND again, *if Christ be really risen from the Dead, and is become the first Fruits of them that slept; if in him all Men shall be made alive; every Man in his own Order; Christ the first Fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his Coming;* then 'tis certain, that we are under the strictest Engagement, and have the very highest Encouragement, to embrace the Terms of his holy *Gospel*, and to pay a cheerful Obedience to him in all Things; and that 'tis our Duty accordingly to be very zealous, and incessantly industrious in his Service. My Business

SER M. finess therefore, in the farther Prosecution
 XI. of these Words; shall be to endeavour to
 confirm your Faith, to strengthen your
 Hope, to animate your Zeal, and encourage your Obedience.

IN Order to which, give me Leave to resume the Apostle's Argument, and prove the Suppositions already made.

I. *First*, THEN I shall shew that the Resurrection of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, is a Matter of Fact most unexceptionably well attested, which will soon, (for it must needs) be granted, if only we consider, *First*, The Qualifications of the Witnesses to it. *Secondly*, The Nature and Circumstances of the Fact, as by them related. And *Thirdly*, The severe Scrutiny that it underwent. And

First, As for the Qualifications of those that were Witnesses to it, they were Men of unquestionable Abilities, and unsuspected Integrity; so free from all Shadow of Suspicion, that it can hardly be imagin'd, that they should be either ignorant of the Truth of the Fact, or mistaken

Of Christ's Resurrection.

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ken about it, or under any Temptation to SERM.
misreport it. XI.

FOR the whole Question is, whether that same *Jesus*, whom the *Jews* had crucified, were risen again or no; that he was so, was constantly affirmed, by very considerable Numbers, above five hundred at once, who had seen him alive after his Crucifixion.

AND among the Rest, *twelve* there were, who made it their Business to bear Witness to it, and publish it abroad, wherever they came. And these were Men, who had been of his immediate Retinue, and his daily Companions for three Years together: Men, that had their Senses about them, and were too well acquainted with the Person of the deceas'd, to be imposed upon by any Counterfeit: Men, that were themselves far from being hasty to believe it, or easy to be satisfied about it; so far from that, that when first it reached their Ears, it pass'd but *for an idle Tale* with Luke xxiv.
them, betraying rather the Credulity, and ^{11.}
Levity of the good Women, that brought the Tidings, than deserving any Credit. And when the News was again confirmed
to

SERM. to them by two of the Disciples, who had
 XI. already seen him; and when he appeared
 to them all together, even whilst they were
 conferring, and disputing about him; yet
 still their Fears, and Doubts were such, as
 would not suffer them to be convinc'd of
 the Reality of his Resurrection; they only
 supposed, that *they had seen a Spirit*. And
 even when he clear'd up that Scruple too,
 by *shewing them his Hands, and Feet*, and
permitting them to handle him, their Belief
 was still suspended with Joy and Wonder,
 not yet perfectly satisfied, 'till he had brought
 into their Minds; that this was no more,
 than what he himself had formerly fore-
 told, and open'd their Understanding to
 discern, that the Scripture was hereby most
 remarkably fulfilled.

NAY, even after this, one of their Com-
 pany, who happen'd to be absent, was so
 very *faithless*, that he was resolved, not to
 give Credit to the unanimous Report of all
 his Brethren, unless he also might be per-
 mitted (as after a few Days he was) *to see*
the Print of the Nails in his Hands, and
thrust his Finger into his wounded Side.

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AND now it was, and not till now, after all this repeated sensible Demonstration, that they were all of them, entirely and satisfactorily convinc'd, that so indeed it was. And in Truth there was no Room for Deception in the Case; for here was an Object of Sense, fairly presented to a Company of Men, that had their Sight and Feeling, and made the best Use they could of it; no Impediment intervening the mean while, to hinder them from making a right Judgment. For the Lord appeared to them, with all the Advantage they could desire; not in the Dusk of Light, to conceal himself from their clearer View, nor in a Glare of Light, to dazle and confound their Eyes; but in serene and open Day; not glancing by them on a sudden, and at a Distance, but abiding with them, and conversing Face to Face, and that not once or twice and away, leaving them still under Surprize or Suspence; but frequently, and familiarly, shewing himself to be really alive; not by one, but by many infallible Proofs, being seen of them forty Days, and speaking of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

Now

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XI.

SERM.

XI.

Now I should think it no less than an utter Impossibility, that there should be any Delusion in all this; or that the Force of Imagination, should so far enchant the Senses of so many Men, and for so long a Time, and upon so many several Occasions; as to possess them with a Belief, that they saw a Person alive, that had been dead, a Person with whom they had been intimately acquainted, and that they felt the Substance of his Flesh and Bones, and heard him talk, and talked with him, and held on this Conversation from Time to Time, for forty Days together; when there was really no such Thing, nor any Thing like it.

If this be possible, it must be impossible at the same Time, to distinguish between Dreaming and Waking; nay, we cannot so much as tell, whether we are talking of *Christ's Resurrection* or no, at this very Minute. But if the Evidence of Sense be not all a Cheat, if it be in any Case to be relied on, it must be allow'd in this Case of all others; in which all possible Caution was used, and no possible Obstruction can be pretended.

WE

WE may safely therefore conclude, that ^{S E R M.} the Apostle's Account of our Lord's Resur- ^{XI.} rection is true; if their Fidelity in reporting the Truth, be but equal to their Abilities, and the Opportunities they had of coming to the Knowledge of it. And of this there can no Doubt remain with any Body, that is but well inform'd of their Character, and the Manner of their Deportment on this Ocasion.

FOR they were plain uneducated Men, without much depth of Science or Learning, unpractis'd in Fineness and Policy, Masters of no Slight or Cunning, beyond that of catching a few silly Fish; not furnish'd with Dexterity or Address, to varnish over a false and monstrous Story (had the Resurrection of *Christ* been so) with the most plausible, and the most durable Colours; such as might pass upon the most discerning, and bear down all Opposition, and stand the Test of many Ages.

AND if their Subtlety had been deeper than it was, their Probity was still too great, to be the Authors of such a base Contrivance. There is an Air of Honesty, and Simplicity in all their Writings, their Testimony

SERM. testimony is deliver'd with all Manner of
 XI. Freedom and Openness, and without any
 Reserve or Subterfuge. And they profess
 themselves the Disciples of that Master, in
whose Mouth, no Guile was found; and the
 Doctrine they teach, is pursuant to the In-
 structions they had receiv'd from him, and
 conformable to his Example; utterly disal-
 lowing of all Fraud or Falshood, Partiality
 or Hypocrisy; and their Practice was suita-
 ble to their Profession; for they renounced
 the hidden Works of Dishonesty, and the
 Ways of Craftiness, and chose rather by
 the Manifestation of the Truth, to com-
 mend themselves to Mens Consciences in
 the Sight of God. And their Reputation
 was so clear in this Respect, that their
 most malicious Enemies, could never tax
 them with the least Insincerity.

AND is it to be imagin'd after all, that
 Men so strict, both in their Doctrine and
 Morals, and so grave and sober in all their
 Conversation, should chuse to forfeit an
 unblemish'd Reputation all at once; by in-
 venting, and publishing the most silly boot-
 less Lye (if a Lye it had been) that ever
 was hatch'd in any Romancer's Brain? For,
 if

f they did indeed believe themselves, to be the Professors, and Teachers of the true Religion; why should they unnecessarily press Falshood into the Service of Truth? Why should they betray a good Cause with such an improper Defence? And if they had designedly gone about to impose a false Religion upon the World, 'tis strange they should, at first Step, cross their own Design, and choak People's Belief, by telling a big sounding Story, to common Apprehensions so improbable, and so obvious to be detected upon Enquiry.

NOR is it to be conceiv'd, what Motive should put them upon so extravagant an Undertaking. They had no Prospect of Profit, Honour, or Pleasure, to lure them on, and make them forget the Difficulty and Danger, with which they were surrounded. No! they knew well enough that the whole Weight of temporal Interest, was in the opposite Scale: They knew that the Name of a *Christian*, was hateful to the *Jews*, and suspected by the *Romans*; they knew that Disgrace and Loss, Tribulation and Persecution, Torments and Death were like to be their Portion in this

SER M. World. And, alas! what could they hope
 XI. for in the next, if they had been conscious
 to themselves all the while, of mocking
 God, and abusing the Credulity of Man-
 kind; by a notorious Imposture.

It is impossible therefore, it should be
 any Thing less, than a certain Knowledge
 of the Truth of what they related, and a
 Zeal for God's Honour, and the Good of
 Men, and a certain Expectation of a fu-
 ture Reward; that could make them so
 constant to this Testimony, with so much
 present Inconvenience and Hazard, and al-
 most unavoidable Ruine to themselves. A-
 gainst the Witnesses therefore of our Sa-
 viour's *Resurrection*, there can lie no fair
 Exception. And indeed,

II. *Secondly*, If we consider, the Nature
 and Circumstances of the Fact; which they
 relate; they are such as render it an impra-
 cticable Thing to pretend it was done, and
 to persuade People to believe it, unless it
 had been done.

For, they inform us very precisely of
 the Time when he arose, and by whom it
 was first discover'd; how the Stone was
 rolled

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rolled away from the Door of the Sepulchre; and the Linnen Cloaths found there, in which he was wrapp'd, and the Napkin in which his Head was bound; but that the Body was not there. And, we are told that *Peter*; and another of his Disciples, ran hastily to the Sepulchre, when first they were alarm'd with the Report, and went in, and saw, and believ'd. Nor could this, if true, be long kept a Secret; for the Keepers themselves were startled at the Earth-quake, and trembled, and stood aghast like dead Men at the Sight of the Angel; who came to roll away the Stone, with a Countenance like Lightning, and Raiment white as Snow. And as soon as they could recover Themselves out of their Fright, they went into the City, and shewed unto the Chief Priests, all the Things that were done.

AND what shall we say now? Were the Soldiers also Confederates in the Plot? Or were they scar'd out of their Wits, by the dreadful *Morro* of their own cowardly Imagination? Their Story was very surprising however, and 'tis strange there should be so little Curiosity, if that were all, in

U 2

Jeru-

S E R M.
XI.

SERM. *Jerusalem*, that Nobody should think it
 XI. worth their while, to examine into the
 Truth of the Matter; especially, since it
 was so easy to be disprov'd, if false; only
 by repairing to the Sepulchre, to see if it
 were safe and undisturb'd, and the dead
 Body still remaining there; and if it were,
 to call the People together, and expose it
 to their open View, in Confutation of that
 idle groundless Rumour, that was spread
 about to the contrary.

BUT perhaps the *Chief Priests* and *Ru-*
lers, having now, (as they thought) got a
 fair Riddance of him, they feared and ha-
 ted; might be grown negligent and secure,
 and not at all apprehensive of any farther
 Trouble from him, or his despicable Fol-
 lowers. No! no such Matter — Jealousy
 is always watchful, and the Miracles they
 had seen him perform, with their own Eyes,
 while he lived; made them not altogether
 to condemn him now he was dead; espe-
 cially, being aware, that he had expressely
 foretold his own Resurrection. And there-
 fore they made their timely Application to
Pilate, saying, *Sir, we remember this De-*
ceiver said, while he was yet alive, after
three

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three Days I will rise again. Command therefore, that the Sepulchre be made sure until the third Day, lest his Disciples come by Night, and steal him away, and say unto the People that he is risen. And having obtain'd their Request, they went themselves, and made the Sepulchre sure, sealing the Stone, and setting a Watch.

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XI.

Mat. xxvii.
63, &c.

So that there was all possible Precaution taken, to prevent a Cheat, if there had been Room for it; and Abundance of sly Artifice used besides, to blast the Credit of his Resurrection, if it should prove true. For it should seem, they were pretty well resolv'd aforehand, how to account for it; and should the Worst come to the Worst, it was but tutoring the Soldiers, for Money, to say; *that his Disciples came by Night, and stole him away, while they slept*, and that they thought would be sufficient to discountenance the Belief of it, especially when back'd with their Frowns and Menaces. But if the Soldiers were indeed asleep, I am sure the Malice of the *Chief Priests and Pharisees* was awake, but to little Purpose. For how could they who were asleep, be appeal'd to, as Witnesses of

SERMON. what pass'd? How could they affirm that
 XI. he was stole away; how, could they tell,
 but that he might be risen?

If there had been any Stress to be laid, upon such an inconsistent Dream as this, no Doubt it would have been made Use of to compleat the fortunate Discovery; especially when they were provok'd to it by the Apostles, who ceased not to proclaim *Jesus*, and the *Resurrection*, wherever they came. Nay, even when they were straitly forbidden, with high Threats; they still persisted, we find, and declar'd to their very
 Acts v. 30. *Faces; The God of our Fathers hath raised up Jesus whom ye slew, and hanged on a Tree, him hath God exalted, &c.* And a stabbing Provocation this was; for
 Ver. 33. *when they heard that, they were cut to the Heart, and took Counsel to slay them.* And why did they not rather take Counsel to disprove them, to confute them, to confound them, by the worthy Testimony of their watchful Soldiers? Alas! Truth was too mighty to be opposed, by such weak Artifice; *the Word of God grew, and encreased* prodigiously, against the whole Stream of their Power and Interest, and the

the Storm of their Spight and Fury. And S E R M. XI.
therefore, I may firmly conclude, that the *Resurrection of Christ* (which was the main Article) was a Matter of Fact most unexceptionably well attested. I proceed

Secondly, To shew, that this once admitted, is also an irrefragable Proof of the Truth of Christianity in General. And this will follow so easily and naturally, that it will not stand in Need of a tedious Proof. For it must be granted, that wherever a real Miracle is wrought, in Confirmation of any Doctrine, that has besides, the Marks of intrinsic Goodness upon it; that Doctrine has all the Advantage in Point of Evidence, all the Degrees of Certainty, that any Thing reveal'd from God, can well have, or need to have.

AND it must be granted again, that the *Raising up Christ from the Dead*, was a real Miracle, a most inimitable Miracle indeed, far above the Power or Activity of any created Being. For to restore Life, is equivalent to the Giving of Life; and to give Life is the proper Act of a Creator. Such an Act, as no Creature can fairly be suppos'd capable of, by any inherent Virtue

SERM. its own. And therefore the *Resurrection*
 XI: of *Christ*, must be ascrib'd, to the immediate
 Will or Power of God himself.

NAY, and if there were Room or Liberty to suppose, that it might have been effected by any inferior Agent; yet we could hardly imagine, that it should be within the Compass of the *Devil's* Power, since he never attempted any Thing like it, that any credible *History* informs us of: And yet it may be presum'd he would, if he could, in some other Instance; if it had been but to vye with the Almighty, and to weaken, or elude the Force of those Arguments, which are drawn from this greatest of Miracles. But we may be sure, that he would not have been concern'd in raising up our *Saviour*, even though he had Abilities for it; because it had been in Effect to undermine his own Kingdom, and to set up a dangerous Rival against himself.

TAKING it for granted therefore, that no Power less than that of God, or from God, (which is all one) could atchieve so mighty a Work; I say the *Resurrection of Christ* is a most undeniable Proof of the Truth of
Christianity,

Christianity, and of all *Christ's* Declarations, S E R M.
concerning his own Person and Office; XI.
and the End of his coming into the World,
and the Doctrines, Precepts, and Promises
that he left behind him, to be faithfully
recorded by his Followers. And this is
the very Use that they made of it, when
they first preach'd it. For thus *St. Peter*
closes his Argument. *Therefore let all the* Acts ii. 36.
House of Israel assuredly know, that God
hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have
crucified, both Lord and Christ; and again,
Him hath God exalted with his right Hand, Chap. v.
to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give ^{31.}
Repentance to Israel, and Forgiveness of
Sins.

IN short, if *Christ* be a *Deceiver* after
all, he is a *Deceiver* that appear'd with
more ample and honourable Credentials,
than ever any true *Prophet* had. For over
and above all the Miracles and Predictions,
for which he was so famous while he
liv'd, he foretold the Manner of his own
Death, and the Certainty of his Resur-
rection to ensue; which being verified in
the Event, and by a Power apparently di-
vine; it must either follow, that God gave
his

S E R M. his Testimony, and Countenance to a Lye,
 XI. which his Veracity and Goodness will not
 permit him to do; or else that *Jesus* was
 of a Truth, what he gave himself out to
 be, a *Teacher sent from Heaven, and the*
only Son of God. So that the Objects of
 Faith have in the last Result, the same Cer-
 tainty, with the Objects of Sense or Know-
 ledge. For the only Assurance we have,
 that we are not deceiv'd, in Things, of
 which we have a due Sensation, or a clear
 and distinct Perception is; because there
 is a true and a good God, that will not
 suffer us to be deceived, in the right Use
 of those Faculties he has given us. And
 the very same Assurance we have, that
 we shall not be deceived in the Exercise
 of our Faith, resting itself upon his infal-
 lible Testimony. But to hasten,

III. *Thirdly, THE Resurrection of Christ,*
 is likewise a manifest Proof of our *Resur-*
rection to Life at the last Day; and the
 Doctrines immediately depending upon it,
 such as are the Immortality of the Soul,
 and a future State of just Retribution, for
 the Things done in the Body. For though

the Permanency of the Soul, was a dark SERM.
and difficult *Problem* in *Philosophy*, and XI.
Pliny the Naturalist, thought it a Thing
out of the Power of God, to restore the
Dead to Life; the Possibility of it has been
demonstrated beyond Contradiction, in the
Resurrection of our *Lord*. And that which
was possible in his Case, is also possible in
ours, if the same Power shall see fit to in-
terpose: And he that hath all Power com-
mitted to him both in Heaven and Earth:
He who died, and rose, and revived, that
he might be Lord, both of the Dead and
Living: He, I say, hath given us the sa-
cred Pledge of his Word, that it will.

THIS was the Consolation he gave to
penfive *Martha*, saying; *I am the Resur-* Jo. xi. 25.
rection and the Life. Whosoever believeth
in me, though he were dead, yet shall he
live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in
me, shall not die for ever. And St. Paul
therefore, establishes the Belief of the later,
as a Consequent upon the former. If we I Thess.
believe, that Jesus died, and rose again, e- iv. 14.
ven so them which sleep in Jesus will God
bring with him. And again, with greater
Confidence, We believe also, and therefore 2 Cor. iv.
Speak 13, 14.

SERM. speak knowing, that he that raised the Lord

XI.

Acts xvii.

31.

Jesus, shall raise us also by Jesus. And again, speaking of a Day appointed by God, for judging the World in Righteousness, by the Man whom he hath ordained; he adds, that he hath given Assurance of this unto all Men, in that, he hath raised him from the Dead. And in Assertion of the same, again in this Chapter, he declares; That, as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; and that as we have born the Image of the earthly Man, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly. And St. Peter

1 Ep. i. 3. blesses God on this very Account, that he
4. hath begotten us again to a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, unto an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, reserved in Heaven for us. From all which Passages, it is abundantly clear; that the Resurrection of Christ, if either he himself, or his Apostles truly understood its Virtue and Power, is a pregnant Proof, and a sure Pledge of a general Resurrection; in which all good Christians shall be rais'd, in Resemblance and Conformity to Christ their Head, and great Exemplar.

AND now in the last Place, my beloved

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ved Brethren, what should be the proper ^{S E R M.} Tendency, and best Use of what has been ^{XI.} said, but in Compliance with the Exhortation of the Text, to continue *stedfast* and *unmoveable* in this Faith, and this Hope. A Faith so well grounded; and a Hope so well supported as ours is. For what can be better prov'd in its Kind, what can be less capable of Mistake or Misrepresentation, or less liable to any Exception, than is the *Resurrection* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*?

AND then, upon that Supposition, what can be better confirm'd, or more infallibly attested, than is the Truth of the Christian Religion?

AND *lastly*, What Religion can afford us a nobler, or a clearer Prospect of Happiness, than that Resurrection, of which we are assured we shall be made Partakers, through *Christ*, and the glorify'd State we shall then enter upon?

AND shall we still stagger to and fro, in Uncertainty? Shall we suffer ourselves to be toss'd about, with every Wind of Doctrine? Shall we part with solid Truth
for

SERM. for Fancies and Novelties? Shall we tamely permit our Religion, to be run down by Noise and Cavil? Or shall we exchange our glorious Hope, for empty Nothings? Oh no! let us build ourselves up in our most holy Faith, since we have so stable a Foundation; and let us lay hold on the sure Anchor of Hope, that is set before us; and let the Fruits of this *Christian* Faith and Hope, be seen in a *Christian* Conversation. For such a firm Faith, and such a well fix'd Hope, should naturally be productive of good Works.

AND therefore they are joined together in the *Text* also: for our *Apostle* does not only exhort us *to be stedfast, and unmoveable*, but moreover to be *always abounding in the Work of the Lord*; *forasmuch as we know, that our Labour is not in Vain in the Lord*. We know it, *i. e.* we are firmly persuaded of it, and have no more Cause to doubt of it, than if we were already in Possession of our promised Reward.

AND since our Faith carries all the Evidence with it, that 'tis possible to have of Things not seen: Since our Hope comes

Of Christ's Resurrection.

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as near absolute Security, as 'tis possible to be, without the blest Fruition and Experience; We stand obliged sure in all Reason, as well as Duty, and we have all imaginable Encouragement, to be *always abounding in the Work of the Lord, i. e.* to be very zealous, and industrious in his Service, to be very chearful, and constant, and persevering in our Obedience to him, and by a continual Growth in Grace and Godliness, *to press toward the Mark of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus; that so by any Means we may attain* (with St. Paul our Monitor and Guide) *to the Resurrection of the Just.*

I SAY, in the first Place we stand in all Reason bound, to do our utmost in God's Service; even upon this Consideration, that he is so gracious and liberal to us. For he does not expect, or require at our Hand, any notional, or abstracted Kind of Love: He does not exact from us a rigid Task of Duty, separate from our Interest; but he permits us, he emboldens us; nay, he commands us in serving him, *to have* Heb. xi. 26.
Respect to the Recompence of Reward, look- Heb. xii.
ing unto Jesus the Author, and Finisher of ^{2, 3.}
our

SERM. *our Faith; who, for the Joy that was set*
 XI. *before him, endured the Cross, and despised*
 Heb. vi. *the Shame, and is set down at the right*
 19, 20. *Hand of the Throne of God: And entered*
into the Veil as our Fore-runner.

AND is there not all the Congruity and Equity in the World, that we should give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure; and that we should labour in God's Vineyard, before we expect to receive our Wages? Nay, is it not most unreasonable, and absurd indeed, to hope to arrive at the Goal *without running the Race*, to win the Prize without entering the Lists; or (which is all one) to see the Lord without Holiness, or to be saved by the Gospel, without Repentance and Newness of Life? No! no! we are under a Necessity, in the Nature and Reason of the Thing, of *working out our Salvation* before we can attain to it.

AND the Resurrection of *Christ* from the Dead, and our Faith and Hope founded thereupon, lay us under the strictest Obligation, to *be holy as he is holy*, and to *purify ourselves as he is pure*. This indeed is the true Intendment and Force of our *Baptismal Vow*, as was significantly represented

presented by the ancient Rite of *Immersion*, SERM. IX.
and *Emerſion*, according to that of the A-
poſtle; *Therefore we are buried with him* Rom vi. 4.

by *Baptiſm into Death*, that, like as Chriſt
was *raiſed up from the Dead by the Glory*
of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in
Newneſs of Life. The Death and *Reſur-*
rection of Chriſt, and our Conformity to
both, in Baptiſm, by being firſt (as the an-
cient Uſage was) dipp'd into the Water,
and then riſing out of it; infers a neceſſary
Obligation firſt of *dying unto Sin*, by a to-
tal Renunciation of Sin, and *riſing again*
unto Righteouſneſs, by the habitual Pra-
ctice of it. Knowing this, as the Apoſtle
well urges, *That our old Man is crucified* Ver. 6.
with him, that the Body of Sin might be
deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve
Sin. And therefore, as being planted to-
gether, both in the *Likeneſs of his Death*,
and his *Reſurrection*, we ought to reckon
ourſelves accordingly, to be dead indeed un-
to Sin, but alive unto God, through our
Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

BUT beſides the Engagements we lie
under, we have all poſſible Encourage-
ment, to *abound in the Work of the Lord*,

SERMON with all Zeal, and Alacrity, and Perseve-

XI. *rance, forasmuch as we know, our Labour is not in Vain in the Lord.* This, this is the sacred Anchor of our Hope; and Hope we know, is the most vigorous Spring of Action. It is that which keeps Things up in perpetual Motion, and preserves Industry alive in the World; and enables Men to run through many Toils, and many Hazards.

It is for this, the Merchant changes his native Clime, and sails through deep and distant Seas, and wrestles with Winds and Tempests, and scorches under the Line, and freezes under the Pole; and all upon the hopeful, but hazardous Prospect, of finding his Account in the End; for he is far from being certain, that this Labour shall not be in Vain; far from being certain of arriving at the desir'd Port, or returning Home again with Wealth, or in Safety. And, even, if he should become Master of his Wishes; worldly Wealth at best, is but a very perishable Commodity, a very uncertain Possession. It is liable to many Accidents, Vicissitudes, and great Abuses, and it has this the worst of all
bad

bad Qualities; that the more a Man sets SERM.
his Heart upon it, the less it satisfies; for XI.
he that loveth Silver, shall not be satisfied Ecclef. v.
with Silver. 10.

BUT as we know, that we were not re-
deemed with corruptible Things, as Silver
and Gold, but, with the precious Blood of
Christ; so we know, that the Purchase is
equally worthy of the Price, and that we
have a secure Title to an infinite and ever-
lasting Reward; which, our Perseverance
only supposed, nothing can defeat us of.
For we have the Pledge of God's own in-
fallible Word, that *if we remain faithful*
unto Death, he will give us a Crown of
Life. And in this Respect also we are
assured, that Death itself shall become a
Blessing to us, as being the Introduction
to a much happier State: So saith the Spi-
rit. *Blessed are the Dead, that die in the* Apoc. xiv.
Lord, for they shall rest from their Labours: 13.
And these Labours, shall be succeeded by
Joys inexpressible and inconceivable; for,
as it is written, *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear* 1 Cor. ii.
heard, neither have entred into the Heart 9.
of Man, the Things which God hath prepa-
red for them that love him. And these Joys
X 2 shall

SERM. shall be both pure and permanent, for God
XI. will *wipe away all Tears from our Eyes;*
and there shall be no more sorrowing, nor
crying, nor Pain, nor Death: But we shall
reign for ever and ever, with him that liv-
eth, and was dead, but is alive for ever-
more. Therefore, my beloved Brethren (to
conclude with the Apostles Words) Be ye
stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in
the Work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye
know, that your Labour is not in Vain in
the Lord.





S E R M O N XII.

Of plucking out a right Eye, and
cutting off a right Hand.

MATTH. V. 29, 30.

*And if thy right Eye offend thee,
pluck it out, and cast it from
thee; for it is profitable for thee,
that one of thy Members should
perish, and not that thy whole
Body should be cast into Hell.*

*And if thy right Hand offend thee,
cut it off, and cast it from thee;*

X 3

for

Of plucking out

*for it is profitable for thee, that
one of thy Members should perish,
and not that thy whole Body should
be cast into Hell.*

SERM.
XII.



HIS Chapter contains those admirable Rules of Gospel-perfection, which not only carry the Righteousness of the *Christian* far above the boasted Righteousness of the *Scribes*, and *Pharisees*; but do also make it plain upon the Comparison, that those great Pretenders, were the notorious Transgressors; nay indeed, the Corrupters of that Law, which they made Profession of observing, with the utmost Exactness. For they stuck to the naked Letter, and contented themselves with bare outward Compliances, but remain'd the mean while uncircumcised, both in Heart, and Ears; and took no Care to cleanse the Inside, or to purge themselves of those evil Affections, that defiled the whole Man.

OF this they stand justly tax'd, and convicted by our blessed Lord, in several undeniable Instances; and among the Rest, in the Case of Adultery, in the 27th, and 28th

28th Verses. *Ye have heard, that it was said by them of old Time, Ye shall not commit Adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed already Adultery with her in his Heart.* In which it seems to be plainly intimated, that they held themselves no farther obliged by the Law against Adultery, than to abstain from the grosser Act of Uncleanness; whereas he, that was indeed the Law-giver, and therefore the most authentic Interpreter, extends this Law, even to a lustful Look, and an adulterous Heart; designing, as much as possible, to cut up the very Roots of that carnal Concupiscence, that tempts Men to commit actual Lewdness.

AND by way of Enforcement to this, it is subjoined immediately, as in the Text, *if thy right Eye offend thee, &c.* implying, that it were more eligible, even to want a *right Eye*, or a *right Hand*; than by any wanton Dalliance, or wandering of Desire, to be involv'd in the Guilt, and doom'd to the Punishment of an Adulterer.

THIS seems to be the direct Aim of the Text, as it stands strictly connected with

SERM. the Verses foregoing: But since much the
 XII. same Words are introduced, and applied
 in a very different Manner, both in the
 18th Chapter of this *Gospel*, and in the 9th
 of St. *Mark*; they are evidently capable of
 being understood in a larger Sense, such as
 may comprehend every other inordinate
 Lust, as well as this; every Thing or Oc-
 casion indeed, that may thus *offend us*, or
 cause us to offend.

AND because it will be so much the more
 useful, I will consider it now, as a general
 Precept, extending to every such Occasion
 and Purpose; and that we may have it the
 readier for Use, and may be thoroughly
 reconciled to the Practice of it: I shall

I. *First*, EXPLAIN the Meaning of the
 Precept to you, a little more particularly;
 and illustrate it by proper Instances.

II. *Secondly*, I SHALL endeavour to con-
 vince you of the Reasonableness, and Ex-
 pediency thereof.

I. *First*, I SHALL explain the Meaning
 of the Precept more particularly.

AND because the Precept is condition-
 al;

nal; if *thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out, if thy right Hand offend thee, cut it off:* SERM.
XII.

We must first enquire into the true Importance of the Word, that is here translated *offend*, that we may understand the Nature of this Condition.

Now the primitive Signification of the Word *Σκάνδαλον*, (from whence the Verb *Σκανδαλίζει* here used; is deriv'd,) is threefold: It signifies either any Obstacle or Hindrance, that is laid in a Man's Way to prevent his Proceeding; or else a *Stone* or *Stumbling-block*, that may be apt to throw him down; or lastly, a Snare or Gin, set on Purpose to entrap him.

AND in the *metaphorical*, and scriptural Sense of the Word, adapted to each of these Significations; that may be said to *offend* a Man, that puts a Stop to his Progress, in a Course of Virtue and Piety; or occasions his Falling into Sin, or leads him into any Snare of the Devil. In short, any dangerous Temptation, or whatsoever it is that exposes us to any such, is the Offence that is here meant, and ought carefully to be avoided; even at the Expence, if need should be, of a *right Eye*, or a *right Hand*.
Secondly,

SERM. *Secondly, BUT* then the Question that
 XII. next arises, is, what should be meant by
 the *right Eye*, and the *right Hand*. It cannot well be conceived, that we should be obliged hereby in the most rigid Construction, actually so to *dismember* ourselves. For that would be repugnant to the sixth Commandment, which by a just Analogy; requires us to be tender of the Limbs, as well as Lives, both of ourselves, and other Men. And such an Interpretation is so far from being countenanc'd, by any good Reason, Authority, or Example; that *Origen* and others, who upon a mistaken Principle, practis'd a like unnatural Cruelty upon themselves, stand condemn'd by the Church for so doing.

AND the Truth is, such a mutilating and mangling of our Bodies, would contribute nothing at all, towards the preserving the Innocence, and Purity of our Souls. For in the Instance more immediately referred to, a Man might pluck out both Eyes, and cut off both Hands, and yet leave the Fire of Lust burning secretly in his Heart. And unless the inward Fuel be withdrawn, which feeds that Fire; unless the unlawful
 Desire

Desire be check'd and subdued; the Man, SERM.
though *blind* and *maim'd*, would still in XII.
Heart be a down-wright *Adulterer*. Since
therefore the parting with either, or both
of these Members, would not be sufficient
to eradicate any Disease that lies deep in
the Heart; we may reasonably interpret
the Precept, in a Sense that is better ac-
commodated to Practice, and will be more
effectual to the Purpose. And that may
most probably be,

Thirdly, IN a figurative Sense, by way
of *hyperbole*, or Exaggeration parallel; to
what St. Paul says of the *Galatians*, I Gal. iv.
bear you Record, that if it had been possible,
ye would have plucked out your own Eyes, and
have given them to Me. ^{15.} The true Force of
which Expression amounts but to this; that
in the Fervour of their Zeal, and Love to-
wards him; they thought nothing too
much, that was either practicable, or fitting,
to do, or even suffer, for his Sake.

AND so when our Saviour commands us,
if our right Eye offend us, to pluck it out,
and if our right Hand offend us, to cut it
off; he intends, no doubt, to oblige us to
be ready to do, and submit to any Thing,
that

SERM. that is in our Power, for the avoiding of

XII.

~~~~~  
Sin; even to the Loss of two of the most useful Members we have, if that were either lawful, or likely to prove available. But though in Strictness it is neither, yet we are certainly oblig'd to do that which comes nearest to it; that is, so to suspend or restrain the Use of these, and all other our bodily Members, together with the Affections that usually set them on Work; that they may never become the willing, and industrious Instruments of Unclean-ness, or any other kind of Unrighteousness.

So that the Precept falls in directly, *with*

Gal. v. 24. *that of St. Paul, of crucifying the Flesh*

Coloss. iii. *with the Affections and Lusts, or mortifying*

5. *our Members which are on the Earth; nei-*

ther of which, do oblige us to torture or mangle our own Bodies, but only to quell that inordinate Concupiscence, and those Motions of Sin, which are too apt to work in our Members, and make them rebellious and ungovernable.

IN short, the plain Meaning of the Precept, stript of *Metaphor*, is this; that we should be in a constant Preparation of Mind, to part with every Thing  
that

that is most delightful or desirable, most commodious or profitable, and to submit to every Thing that is most disagreeable, or irksome, most inconvenient, or detrimental to us; rather than offend our own Consciences, by giving into any Temptation or Occasion of Sinning, that may arise from either.

AND that this general Precept may sink the deeper in your Hearts, and grow the more familiar to you in Practice; I shall set some obvious Instances before you, in which it ought always to have its Place, and Force.

Now Life, and Health, being first supposed; the Things which are reckon'd to conduce most to our present Welfare in this World, are Riches, Pleasure, Honour; or to set it at the lowest Liberty, Safety, and Quiet. And all these are in their Degree truly valuable, and may be desir'd, and sought after within their proper Bounds, and both acquir'd and preserv'd by all lawful Means: But whenever any of them happens to interfere, with any Part of our Duty towards God, our Neighbour, or our selves; we must immediately silence every  
Murmur



SERM. Murmur of a Dispute, between Duty and  
 XII. Convenience, and resolve to *maintain a*  
 ~~~~~ *Conscience, void of Offence*, at the Hazard  
 of all that we love, or value.

It is of itself undoubtedly lawful, for a Man to desire, and acquire such a Proportion of worldly Wealth, as may be sufficient to answer the Occasions of his Family, and subsist him comfortably and creditably, according to his Rank and Station. But then this Intention, however lawful and commendable in itself, must never be prosecuted by any unlawful Means; but if the Hand of Providence thinks fit so to straiten him, he must rather chuse to be content with less, than is convenient; than grasp at more than he knows, how honestly to come by.

So again, it is allowable, Nobody questions it, to take a moderate Satisfaction in the Use and Enjoyment of what we possess: But when a Man finds it in his own Case, that Plenty is too apt to minister to Luxury, and Luxury to Lasciviousness; he is oblig'd to *put a Knife to his Throat*, rather than satisfy the Cravings of unruly Appetite; and to refuse the good Creatures
 of

of God, that might otherwise thankfully SERMON
be receiv'd, rather than *abuse his Liberty,* XII.
for an Occasion to the Flesh.

AND though, of all the Pleasures of Life, the most relishing, and, generally speaking, the most innocent, is that of friendly Conversation, season'd with Cheerfulness and Ingenuity; yet a Man is bound notwithstanding, to shake off the most agreeable Companions, when he can no longer hold Communication with them, without suffering his Manners to be corrupted; and to quit the closest, and (in secular Regards) the most serviceable Friendships, rather than be engag'd in Enmity against God, or enter into any Combination of Wickedness.

IN like Manner, though Honour or Reputation, when it is a due Acknowledgment to Merit and Virtue, be indeed a Treasure of great Value; yet when the Esteem of the World, or the Approbation of such, as are at the upper End of it, is not to be purchas'd, but by base and sinful Compliances; I say, whenever the Competition happens thus to lie, between a good Name, and a good Conscience; every honest

SERMON. honest Man's Choice, must be rather to
 XII. live in Obscurity or Disgrace, than vainly
 prefer the Praise of Men, before the
 Praise of God.

ONCE more, though it is what every Man would naturally desire to live, at Freedom from Molestations and Troubles, Struglings and Contentions, Reproaches and false Accusations, Dangers and Mischiefs, and all kind of Restraints or Uneasinesses; yet when a Man is reduced to that sad Strait, that he cannot tell how to redeem his Safety, Liberty, and Ease, without the Forfeiture of his Integrity and Innocence; I say, when that is the Case, he is indispensibly obliged, to surrender all these Conveniences of Life, and to subject himself to the greatest Hardships and Miseries, rather than pay down so unconscionable a Ransom.

AND this is an Obligation, that is perpetually binding, not only in these, but in all other possible Cases; where Profit, Pleasure, Honour, or any other earthly Advantage or Comfort, is no longer found consistent with Duty and Conscience. In all which, by Virtue of the Precept, I have
 been

been hitherto explaining to you; the standing Rule ought to be, stick close to your Duty, whatever comes of it, and preserve a good Conscience, whatever you part with; even though it were as near and as dear, as useful and helpful, as a *right Eye* or a *right Hand*. Nor can this be thought an unequal Composition, *for it is profitable for thee*, that one of thy *Members should perish*, and not that thy *whole Body should be cast into Hell*: Nay, it were much more eligible, to sacrifice Life itself, than to live in Defiance of God's eternal Vengeance, and voluntarily to commit thy Body to the Flames, than daringly to provoke him, *who is able to destroy, both Body and Soul in Hell Torments*; which brings me to consider, what I propos'd in the second Place, *viz.*

II. THE Reasonableness, and Expediency of this Precept.

AND it is doubtless, highly reasonable and expedient, as being equally worthy of the Wisdom and Goodness of God to injoin, and behoveful, and beneficial to Men to observe.

SERM. IT is right worthy of the Wisdom, and
 XII. Goodness of God to injoin; as being of it-
 self, a necessary Preservative against Sin,
 and as being enforc'd with a Motive suffi-
 cient to deter us from Sin.

IT is a necessary Preservative against Sin, because it would be found an impracticable Thing to avoid Sin, without avoiding all the Approaches and Tendencies to it; all those Snares and Rocks that might be most likely to entrap our unwary Steps, or to occasion our Falling. The same wise and holy God therefore, who hath so strictly requir'd us to abstain from the one, hath likewise required us to guard very watchfully against the other; he hath requir'd us to renounce Profit, Pleasure, Honour, and whatever is most acceptable to Flesh and Blood; when once we perceive, that the Tempter is working slyly by any such Means, and endeavouring to seduce us from our Duty.

AND it is a gracious Provision of the almighty Preserver of Men, to defend, and support the Virtue of his frail Creatures, by such needful Cautions as these: For we could never have been at a safe Distance from Sin, if we had been allow'd in too
 near

near a Familiarity with Temptation: It S E R M.
had been next to impossible to *keep* our XII.
Bodies in *Temperance* and *Chastity*, if we
had been permitted freely to indulge our
Appetites, or to endure any lustful Desires
to lurk in the Heart, or to steal their Pas-
sage out through the Eyes; it had been
next to impossible, to maintain an un-
biassed and spotless Integrity; if there had
been any Scope left, for the Grasplings of
Covetousness, or the Aspirings of Ambi-
tion. But since it is requir'd, that these,
and all other irregular Motions, should be
check'd in the Heart, where they take their
first Rise, and laid under perpetual Re-
straint; by this happy Prevention, all Oc-
casion of Sin is as much cut off, as it can
be; and our Duty is render'd much more
feasible to us, than otherwise it would
be.

AND how severe soever this Precept may
seem, of *plucking out a right Eye, or*
cutting off a right Hand; how difficult
soever our Duty may really be, in such In-
stances as cannot be made well to comport
with our present Interest, Convenience, or
Satisfaction; all that Difficulty is infinitely

SER M. overbalanc'd by that powerful Motive;
 XII. with which the Precept is enforc'd. For
 God has solemnly threatned us, upon the
 wilful Violation of our Duty, with ever-
 lasting Punishment. And everlasting Pu-
 nishment is a Motive of much more Force,
 and Weight, to determine us to cleave to
 that which is good; than any kind of
 Temptation can be, to embrace that
 which is evil. For in all the various Ca-
 ses that can be put, this Reason will eter-
 nally hold good; that *it is profitable for
 thee, that one of thy Members* (how ill
 soever it might be spar'd) *should perish,
 rather than thy whole Body should be cast in-
 to Hell*; nay, it is more profitable, that
 this mortal Body, should submit to the Law
 of Mortality, by any Violence here; than
 that the Soul and Body together, should be
 doom'd to suffer a never dying Death here-
 after: Add to this, that it is our Sa-
 viour's exprefs Promise, *That every one that
 forsaketh Brethren or Sisters, Father or
 Mother, Wife or Children, or Lands, for his
 Name's Sake, shall receive an hundred-fold,
 and inherit eternal Life; and that whoso-
 ever loseth his Life for his Sake, shall find
 it;*

it, even eternal Life; for that shall be the happy Lot of all those, *who by patient Continuance in well-doing, and suffering Evil, seek for Honour, and Glory, and Immortality:* So that we have an everlasting Reward proposed to us on the one Hand, as well as everlasting Punishment on the other; the more effectually to deter us from Sin, and to encourage our constant Obedience and resolute Perseverance.

SERM.
XII.
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AND is it possible, that any Thing should operate upon the Hopes and Fears of Mankind, like such Considerations as these? As for all the Losses and Crosses, and the extremest Hardships, or Afflictions that can befall us in this mortal Life; they are all but light and momentary, they are infinitely disproportionate, both in Degree and Duration, to the *Horror and Darknes of Hell, to the Gnawings of the Worm that never dieth, and the Scorchings of the Fire, that neither expireth nor consumeth;* to the fruitless Remorse and inconsolable Despair of damned Souls. And as for all the Conveniences and Comforts of Life, if they were more durable than they are, they are still altogether unsatisfactory, and insuf-

SERM.

XII.

unutterable, the inconceivable Joys of Heaven; and to the Riches of Gods Glory manifested to the Saints, in the Enjoyment of himself.

AND this is abundantly enough to justify the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in imposing a Command of this Nature; that obliges Men to forego all that the World calls good, and to submit to all kind of natural and temporal Evils; rather than forfeit the Happiness of *Heaven*, and incur the Damnation of *Hell*.

Secondly, AND by the same Light we cannot but discern, that it is equally expedient and behoveful for Men, thankfully to comply with, and obey this most reasonable Command.

FOR it obliges them to no more in Truth, than what common Prudence would direct, and a right Valuation of their own Interest, would prompt them to.

THESE are prudential Maxims, that the Reason of Mankind is universally agreed in, *viz.* That the greater Good is to be preferr'd before the less, and the less Evil to be endur'd, rather than the greater; that

that whatsoever Good or Evil will cer-
tainly come to pass in Futurity; may, and
ought to fall under Estimation, as if ac-
tually present: That a present Good may,
and ought to be parted with, and a pre-
sent Evil may, and ought to be endur'd,
for the Attainment of a certain future Good,
and the Avoidance of a certain future Evil;
both of which, do infinitely exceed the
present, in Degree and Duration.

Now the Happiness of Heaven is that
certain future Good, and the Misery of
Hell that certain future Evil, which do
plainly bear an infinite Disproportion to
all that this present World can mean, or
distinguish by those Names; and therefore
if Men can but escape *Hell*, and attain to
Heaven at last, whatever temporal Incon-
venience, Loss, or Damage they sustain by
the Way, they can be no real Losers or
Sufferers, they must be infinite Gainers in
the End.

If then the united Force of Reason, and
Interest, be sufficient to determine Men,
here they are both, with their full Weight
in the same Scale.

SERM. AND though by the strongest Infatuation, Men are too often neglectful of their most important Interests; yet they are actually, and almost constantly determin'd by the same kind of Reason, in Cases of an inferior Nature, and less Concernment. Most Men that look at all before them, even in their temporal Affairs, will endeavour to redeem a greater Inconvenience, by submitting to a less: And the greater they apprehend the Evil to be, the more will they do or suffer, in order to provide against it; they will exchange their pleasantest *Draughts*, for the most ungrateful *Potions*, when any dangerous Sicknes threatens them; they will compound for one Eye to preserve the other, they will suffer the Amputation of their Limbs, one Joint after another; if the *Gangrene* may but be stopp'd, before it reaches the Vitals.

Now the Loss of eternal Life, and the Pain of eternal Death, is incomparably greater, than that of the natural; and yet the former might be prevented, even upon easier Terms, than most Men are willing to submit to, in order to avoid the latter. For we are not under any Necessity, in order

der to this End, literally and actually to SERM.
tear out our *own Eyes*, and lop off our XII.
very Hands and Feet. This, if it were to
be practic'd, would, as I observed at first,
hardly answer our Purpose; and yet much
less would it suffice, if we could, with
holy *Job*, but *make a Covenant with our*
Eyes, that no evil Thoughts might enter
there; and with our Feet, that they might
not hasten to Deceit; and with our Hands,
that no Blot might cleave unto them.

It would suffice, if without literally
torturing our Flesh, or depriving ourselves
of our bodily Members, or destroying
their natural Vigour; we would be content
to crucify those Affections and Lusts, that
are continually irritating our fleshly Part,
to war against the Law of our Minds, and
rebel against the Spirit of Grace.

So that in the Result of this Argu-
ment, we have gain'd a very fair Testi-
mony, to the Reasonableness of this our
Christian Duty, with all its seeming Au-
sterity; since it appears to be entirely a-
greeable to the very Instincts of Nature,
whenever they are rightly pursued.

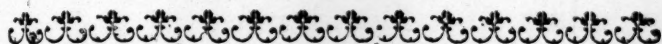
NAY,

SERM. NAY, the *working out our eternal Sal-*
 XII. *vation*, (which is the End of our Faith,
 and Hope) will be found upon Examination, to arise directly out of the great Law of self Preservation, to which we naturally flee for Shelter in all other Cases: And even the severe Duties of Repentance, and Mortification; (as necessary Means, in order to that End) do also evidently flow from the same Principle. For if Self-Preservation be the great Privilege and Refuge of Nature, 'tis natural to seek for the safest Place in that Sanctuary; and that must be, by preserving our whole selves, as we consist of Soul and Body, and by preserving ourselves entirely in Soul and Body, from those Mischiefs which would ruine us for ever. Which, that we may avoid, God of his infinite Mercy grant, in and through *Jesus Christ our Lord*. To whom with the Father, and holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is due; all Praise, Glory, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now, and for ever. *Amen.*



S E R M O N XIII.

Of a Man's gaining the whole World, and losing his own Soul.



MATTH. xvi. 26.

For what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?



PROFIT and Loss are the Considerations, that chiefly engage the Thoughts, and direct the Views, and influence the Actions of all the busy and industrious Part of

SERM.
XIII.

SERM. of Mankind. Every Man, that acts with
 XIII. any tolerable Foresight (before he imbars
 in any weighty Undertaking especially)
 will sit down, and compute carefully; what,
 and how great the Advantage is, that he
 can propose to himself, and what reasonable
 or probable Hopes he has, of succeeding,
 according to his Wishes: And he will
 judge it no less adviseable to compute, what
 Expence it will require to carry on his Design,
 what Hazards it may be attended with
 in the Execution, what Damage he is like
 to sustain, if it should miscarry; and what
 Proportion the Profit will bear to the
 Loss, all Circumstances and Incidents consider'd.

If upon the Calculation, he clearly sees,
 that his Prospect of Advantage is great,
 and that he has good Grounds to hope for
 Success, that he runs little or no Risque,
 and that he cannot suffer much Loss, let
 the Event be as it will; or none however,
 that is in any Degree proportionable to what
 he may most probably gain; these are very
 reasonable, and encouraging Motives
 for him to proceed, and prosecute the Business,
 with all his Vigour, and Application.

IF,

and losing one's own Soul.

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IF, on the other Hand he finds, upon SERM.
comparing Things, that the Success of XIII.
the whole Affair is very uncertain, and
the Advantage (if it should succeed) not
likely to be considerable, no more at the
most, than what is exceedingly outweigh'd
by the vast Charge, and the very unequal
Chance, that it is necessarily subject to,
or the ruinous Consequences, that it may
probably, or will certainly draw after it;
such a foolish and desperate Project as this,
he can be no longer fond of; he must,
and will (if he has any Regard to his
own Preservation) immediately quit the
Thoughts of it.

THESE are the common Measures, (and
very prudential Measures they are) by
which all considerate Men, govern them-
selves in their secular Affairs; and great
Pity methinks it is, that they should not
proceed by the same Rule, wherever it
might be fitly applied; as it might, and
ought without Doubt, in that which is the
greatest, and most important Concern of
all others, the Safety and Welfare of their
immortal Souls.

AND,

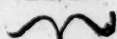
SERM.

XIII.

AND, indeed, if we take the Matter right, our temporal and spiritual Interests are so closely interwoven; that whenever we are consulting about the one, we ought by no Means to leave the other unregarded. For there is no Business, that we can employ ourselves in, no worldly Design that we can pursue, but may prove advantageous, or prejudicial to our spiritual Estate, and promote or hinder our future Salvation. And therefore, when we are busying ourselves, to make a true Computation of the Profit or Loss, that may accrue to us, in the Course of our Affairs; we ought in all Reason to take, not only this Life, but the next, not only Things present, visible and temporal, but the Things that are future, invisible, and eternal, into the Account. For these Things, however distant, and obscure to the Sense, have their certain Existence, and infallible Evidence from Faith; and they must in no wise be reckoned foreign to us now, because we shall assuredly find ourselves very nearly concern'd in them at last, and must abide by them for ever. Whatsoever therefore is *profitable, both for the Life that*

now

now is, and for that which is to come; that SERM.
yields a clear and certain Profit. But if XIII.

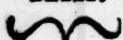


that, which seems to be profitable for the Body, which is mouldring and mortal, be really hurtful to the Soul, which is incorruptible, and immortal; if whilst we are purveying for the Conveniencies and Satisfaction of this Life, we forfeit all the Interests and Comforts of a better; the Loss in that Case, is unspeakably greater, than the Gain can be. Upon the whole then, 'tis apparent, that we ought to take all these Things into Consideration together, and if we would calculate aright, we must calculate for Eternity; otherwise we shall find ourselves most miserably mistaken, at the Foot of the Account. *For what is a Man profited* (saith the Lover, and Saviour of Souls) *if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?*

IN which Words, there is Weight of Reason, sufficient always to cast the Balance on the Side of Virtue, and Religion; even when it stands in Competition with
the



SERM. the highest Pitch of worldly Prosperity,
XIII. that can be supposed, or imagined.



AND, that they may have their full Force upon your Minds, and, I would hope too, their constant good Influence upon your whole Conversation; I shall

I. *First*, EXPLAIN a little more particularly, what the Nature of that *Gain* and *Loss* is, which here stand oppos'd to each other; viz. the *Gain of the whole World*, and the *Loss of a Man's own Soul*.

II. *Secondly*, I SHALL shew somewhat more distinctly, how vastly great the Disproportion is, betwixt the one, and the other.

I. AND *First*, That we may the better conceive, what it is to *gain the whole World*, we must consider what the Nature, and present State of the *World* is.

By the *World*, then we are to understand the Earth, and the Fulness thereof, i. e. all the ample Provision that God has made for the Support, Comfort, and Benefit of Mankind; of all and every Part of which, God himself, upon a Review of
his

his own Creation, pronounc'd that *it was* S E R M. XIII.
very good: And every Creature of God is Tim. iv.
good, faith St. Paul, and nothing to be re-
*fus'd, if it be receiv'd with Thanksgiving.*⁴
 So that the *World* is a very good *World*,
 and every Way well adapted to minister
 to our Necessities and Conveniencies; if we
 could but use it in a fitting and becoming
 Manner. *To the pure* (as the same Apo-Rom. xiv. 20.
 stle speaks) *i. e.* to those, whose Hearts are
 not defiled with corrupt Affections, *all*
Things are pure; the whole *World* is free
 for them to use, and to enjoy, within the
 Bounds, that Reason and Religion prescribe
 to them. And the Use and Enjoyment of
 all worldly Goods, or all of them that can
 come to any Man's Share, so long as it is
 confin'd within such Bounds; is well e-
 nough consistent with our Safety, it is not
that unprofitable Gain of the World, that
would endanger the Loss of our pretious
Souls.

BUT now, here lies the Difference,
 though the *World* be very good, as it is
 God's Workmanship; yet it is no longer
 so, when it is made the Idol of our Af-
 fections. For, as we first corrupt our-
 VOL. I. Z selfe

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1 Ep. ii.
16.

selves by the inordinate Love of it, so we corrupt the World also, by the unreasonable Abuse of the good Things, with which it is furnished; and turn it into a World of Vanity and Sin. And under this Character, the whole World, or all that is in the World, is reducible to three Heads, according to St. *John*; the *Lust of the Flesh*, the *Lust of the Eyes*, and the *Pride of Life*; that is Pleasures, Riches, and Honours, which are the several Objects suited to our most predominant Lusts; and are all in all, as it were, to sensual and earthly Minds.

Now we cannot indulge ourselves, in the immoderate Pursuit of these worldly Acquisitions or Satisfactions; without disobeying and dishonouring God, or injuring our Neighbours, or ourselves. All such Pursuits therefore are sinful, and as such, pernicious and destructive to our Souls; they will fill them with present Guilt and Shame, and will overwhelm them one Day with everlasting Confusion.

AND when Men will gratify their fleshly Appetites, beyond all the modest Rules of Temperance and Chastity; when they will *make Haste to be very rich*, by any Means,

and

and losing one's own Soul.

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and at any Rate; when they affect Pomp and Grandeur, and aspire to raise themselves high, though it be upon the Ruins of Honour and Conscience; when they are resolv'd thus to make the most of the *World*, though they cannot grasp it all; this is the dear-bought Bargain of the Text, which they must pay for at the Price of their *own Souls*; *when God, for all these Things, shall call them into Judgment.*

S E R M.
XIII.
~

IT is therefore an unlawful *Gain of the World*, the unlawful Pursuit of Pleasures, Riches, and Honour, that stands here opposed to that; which is so much more than an equivalent to them all, the *Loss of a Man's own Soul.*

Secondly, THE Nature of which, we come now, in the next Place to enquire into.

AND here 'tis evident, the *Loss of the Soul*, must mean something more than the Loss of this mortal Life. For our Lord had declared in the Verse foregoing, *that whosoever will lose his Life in that Sense, shall find it, i. e. at the Resurrection of the Dead, in a blessed Immortality: And whosoever will save his Life, shall lose it, in a*

S E R M. much worse Sense, *i. e.* in eternal Misery.

XIII. And the *Loss of the Soul*, which is here represented to us in so sensible and affecting a Manner; must in all Reason be understood, not of this temporal Life, but of the much greater Loss, that Men are liable to sustain, in another State after this Life: For, as the very Reason is assign'd, in the Verse immediately after the Text; *The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels; and then he shall reward every Man according to his Works.* The *Loss of the Soul* therefore, is manifestly that, which Sinners shall be doom'd to, when *Christ* shall come to Judgment.

And this Loss consisteth, *first* in a sensible Deprivation of the Happiness of *Heaven*; and *secondly* in the most sensible Suffering of the Miseries of *Hell*.

It consists *first* in a sensible Deprivation of the Happiness of Heaven. *Go ye cursed*, is but the first Part of the Sentence, that the Wicked are like to hear, at the Judgment of the great Day. But doubtless, a very heavy Curse it is, a very terrible Punishment even this; to *be punish'd*
with

and losing one's own Soul.

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*with everlasting Destruction, from the Pre-
sence of the Lord, and the Glory of his
Power.*

S E R M.
XIII.
2 Theff. i.

FOR, if it be the essential Happiness of⁹
the *Saints in Light*, to see God as he is, and
to be made like unto him, and to dwell with
him, in whose Presence is fulness of Joy,
and at whose right Hand are Pleasures for
evermore; then to be everlastingly banish'd
from his blissful Presence, is to be abso-
lutely deprived of all Happiness, of which
God alone is the perpetual Source and
Fountain. And the Deprivation of Hap-
piness, does as necessarily imply Misery; as
the Deprivation of Sight implies Dark-
ness.

AND inexpressible, inestimable is this
Loss; for it is the Loss of such Things, as 1 Cor. ii. 9.
*Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither
hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to
conceive.* So that whatever Images are
made use of in Scripture, to represent the
Happiness of Heaven; the real Happiness
will still surpass the faint Resemblance, by
infinite, and inconceivable Degrees.

BUT however languid, and imperfect
Mens present Notions may be, of this

S E R M. unexperienc'd Happiness; however stupidly they may now desire to barter it away, for the contemptible Dross of this Earth; yet they will, beyond all Question, have a very painful, and afflicting Sense of the Loss of it; when once they come to see, and feel, that it is irrecoverably lost to all Eternity.

W H E N Sinners come once to find, that there is indeed a Heaven, but barr'd up against them, by a Gulf unmoveable; when they reflect, that the Joys, and Comforts of that glorious Place, through the Purchase of *Christ's* Blood, are by their own wilful Folly, forfeited for ever. O the stabbing Pain of such a Thought as this! how will it let loose all their self-revenging Passions upon them, and fill their lost, and abandon'd Souls; with all the Bitterness of fruitless Remorse, hopeless Complaints, and inconsolable Despair? The Loss of Heaven therefore, is, what will be very sadly, and sensibly felt one Day. But this is not the whole, of the Sinners Loss, *when he loses his own Soul.* For

Secondly, BESIDES that he loses that Happiness, of which it was capable; he plunges

plunges it moreover into endless Misery, S E R M.
into actual, and incessant Torments. If XIII.
indeed, Sinners could put off their Being at
the same Time, that they cast away their
Souls; this, I fear, they would be ready e-
nough to accept, as an easy Composition,
for the Pleasures of Sin; they would be glad
to make the most of the *World* at present,
if they could be sure to hear no more of
it hereafter; nay, they would quit, (it may
justly be suspected) all Hopes of future
Happiness, if they could be secur'd against
future Misery; if they could be secured,
that Hell itself, were no more than a State
of Annihilation, or Insensibility.

BUT the Mischief is, an immortal Soul
cannot cease to be; and a sinful Soul, by
God's just Decree, must not only continue
to be, but to be miserable, very sensibly,
exquisitely miserable for ever: For this
shall be the final Award of all Men, as they
stand divided into Righteous, and Wick-
ed: *Those shall go into Life eternal; but* Matth.
these into everlasting Punishment. And this xxv. 46.
Punishment such, as shall be actually, and
severely inflicted by the *Devil*, and *his An-*
gels, those Haters, and Tormentors of Souls:

SERM. It is represented to us in Scripture, by the

XIII.

Mark ix.

44.

Rev. xiv.
2.

Gnawings of the Worm, that never dieth, and the Scorplings of a Fire, that is not quenched; and by a Smoak (as it were) ascending up from the Torments of damned Souls, Day and Night, for ever and ever. Which are very dreadful Representations of a Punishment most exquisite to the Sense, and in Duration infinite; without the least Mitigation, or Intermiſſion. And yet we cannot doubt, but that the real Punishment is, what in Terror, and Horror far transcends any Description, that can be given of it: God grant, we may never make the fatal Experiment, and prove what it is in Reality. However, thus much we may bear in Mind, that if we add the exquisite, and tormenting Sense of inexpressible, and inconceivable Misery, to the very grievous, and afflicting Loss of inexpressible, and inconceivable Happiness; this it is (though what the worst of it is, none but they that feel, can know, but this it is) for a Man to lose his own Soul. Which, that we may have caution enough to avoid, I proceed now

II. Secondly,

II. Secondly, To shew a little more distinctly; how vast the Disproportion is, betwixt *the Gain of the whole World*, and the *Loss of one's own Soul*.

AND in Truth, so very discernible is the Disproportion between them, that, let any Man but make the Case his own, and the Danger present to himself; and he would, without any Deliberation chuse, and act, as if he were demonstrably convinc'd, that the one is infinitely out-weigh'd by the other.

LET any Man then, for Supposition Sake, put himself into the Circumstances of the *rich Man* in the *Parable*; who, upon contemplating his mighty Stores, seem'd to be Master of the Extent of his own Wishes, (if not of the whole World) and therefore said to himself in much Complacency, *My Soul, thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years; take thine Ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* And suppose this seemingly happy, and contented Man, should immediately after this pleasing Dream, hear the startling Notice; that *in* ^{Ver. 20.} *the self-same Night his Soul should be required* ^{Luke xii. 19.}

SER M. quired of him; and he should instantly begin to feel the Pangs of Death coming upon him: What would the deluded Wretch then think, what would he do? Would he not most readily foregoe all his great Abundance, and be content to be reduc'd to his original Nakedness; if upon any Terms he could but purchase a Reprieve from Death. And if by Nature's proper Instinct, the Preservation of this temporal Life, be of more Concern, and Value to a Man, than all worldly Enjoyments besides; much, and infinitely more, must it import him, to secure to himself eternal Life, how dear soever it may cost him.

Luke xvi.
23.

BUT, to put the Supposition still closer, let 'us imagine a Man, to be actually in the same Condition with *Dives*, in the Gospel; when in Hell he lift up his Eyes, being in Torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his Bosom. What think ye, I beseech you, would he not give the World, if he had it at his Disposal, to be released from the Place of Torment he is in? Nay, would he not give it for a Drop of Water, though but never so little, to cool his own Tongue; and for one Moment

to

to assuage his scorching Thirst? Would he SERM.
not, if he could be permitted to come XIII.
once more upon his Trial into this World,
contentedly exchange *the purple, fine Linnen,*
and *sumptuous Fare*, he was formerly used to;
for the Rags, and Scraps, and Sores of La-
zarus, if he might be but eas'd of the Fears,
of those Torments he once felt, or re-
fresh'd with the Hopes of future Comforts?
There cannot be the least Reason to doubt,
but this would be any Man's Choice; if
there were Room, after such sad Expe-
rience, for a second Election. And what
any Man would do, to recover his Soul
from Hell, when it is too late, and will
be found altogether impracticable; that it
is highly reasonable, for every Man to do
in Time, and whilst he hath the Oppor-
tunity in his Hands, to prevent his own e-
ternal Ruine. For it is evident to com-
mon Sense, whenever the Case is put home
enough; *that the Gain of the whole World*
is, and is esteemed, infinitely dispropor-
tionate to *the Loss of one's own Soul*.

BUT, notwithstanding all the Clearness,
of this unquestion'd Truth; Men are but
too apt (God knows) to overlook it in Pra-
ctice,

ctice; because the *World* is the Place of their present Habitation, and a Place, that is stor'd with Variety of Objects, suited to their Senses and Appetites; whereas, *Heaven* and *Hell* are look'd upon, as at a Distance, and in Futurity; and being remote from Sense, they strike the less forcibly upon their Imagination. Hence it is, that Men are so greedy to catch at any present Advantage, the very emptiest Shadow of temporal Felicity; though it be with the utmost Hazard, or at the certain Price of their everlasting Welfare.

I SHALL therefore leave some few Remembrances with you, not so much to convince you how unequal a Bargain it is, to risque the *Loss of your own Souls*, for any Thing, or all that this *World* can afford; as to keep up a lively Sense of this great Truth in your Minds, such a Sense of it, as may render it always applicable to Practice.

LET it then be remembred *First*, that in all Projects of this Kind; the Gain is very uncertain, but the Loss most certain, and unavoidable.

It never yet was, nor will it be any Man's Lot (as our Saviour here for Argument Sake supposes) to *gain the whole World*: And it is but rarely, (if ever) that any Man can get a Share big enough in it, to satisfy his own voluptuous, covetous, or ambitious Desires; for the Cravings of these Appetites are such, as will hardly admit of any Bounds. But it very often happens, that they who are most eager in such Pursuits, are miserably disappointed of their Aim. The merciless Extortioner, and Oppressor, who hastens to enrich himself with the Spoils of the poor, and helpless; frequently meets with a secret Blast, that scatters his ill-gotten Wealth, faster than he can gather it. The Lovers of Pleasure, do frequently both breed, and feed Diseases within their own Bowels, whilst they are pampering the Flesh, and *making Provision to fulfil the Lusts thereof*: And so their dear-bought, short-liv'd Experience, is succeeded by racking Pains, or some chronical Languishing. The Adorers of Honour tread upon very slippery Ground, that makes their Climbing dangerous; and they are oftentimes supplanted
by

SERM. by the Envy, or crush'd by the Power of
 XIII. some more fortunate Rival; and then their
 great Names, that e're while made a Blaze,
 go out, as it were in Contempt, and leave
 a Stench behind them.

SUCH Uncertainties are these Men beset
 with, in all their worldly Pursuits: And
 yet, whether they succeed or not, they are
 alike answerable before God, for the Sins
 of Voluptuousness, Avarice, and Ambition;
 even when they reap little or nothing of
 the Fruits expected from them: They are
 certain in the End, to *lose their own Souls*,
 and that's all, that they are certain of.
 And what an unaccountable Folly must
 it be, for Men to traffic with a deceitful
World, upon such hazardous Terms as
 these?

Secondly, It deserves also to be remem-
 ber'd; that the *Gain* at most, is but incon-
 siderable, and what might easily enough
 be otherwise supplied; but the Loss is vastly
 great, and irreparable.

FOR, if a Man were to be never so suc-
 cessful in this World, what would the whole
 Sum of his imaginary Gains amount to?
 He could do no more than gratify his
 fleshly

and losing one's own Soul.

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fleshy Lusts, with such brutal Pleasures, as SERM. XIII. carry Satiety, and Loathing along with them, or perhaps please his Eye, with the massy Bulk of a Heap of useleſs Riches; or ſooth his Pride, with the Pageantry of a little outward Grandeur.

AND ſurely, the noble Empire over a Man's own Paſſions, the refined Pleaſures of Temperance, the Ornament, and Enjoyment of a meek, and humble, and contented Mind; as they might be had, upon much eaſier Terms, ſo they muſt be, in a true Eſtimate, exceedingly preferable to theſe vain, and empty Satisfactionſ.

AND yet, for theſe Satisfactionſ (as very Trifles, as they are) Men can find in their Hearts, to forfeit the Favour of God, and the Happineſs of Heaven, and to expoſe themſelves to his ſevereſt Wrath and Vengeance, and to loſe, and ruine *their own Souls*; (in which alone, is the Seat of all Senſation, and Perception) in exquisite, and unintermitting Miſery. And this Loſs is utterly irretrievable, the Ruine is beyond repairing; for as the Tree falleth, ſo muſt it lie: There is nothing that *a Man can give in Exchange*, or pay down, as a Ran-
ſom

SERM. fom for his Soul. Hell is a State, not of
 XIII. Probation, but Retribution; there is no
 Room left for Repentance there, and consequently no Possibility of Redemption from it; and what amazing Stupidity then must it be, for to barter, to trifle away their *immortal Souls*, upon such a prodigious Inequality?

Thirdly and *lastly*, It should above all Things be remember'd; that the Gain, set it at the very highest, is but temporal: whereas the Loss is permanent, and eternal.

LET us imagine, if you please (what was never seen) a Man to be the absolute Master of all, that is call'd by the guilded Title of Happiness in this World; to enjoy Health, in perfect and constant Vigour; Wealth without Measure, Pleasures unrestrain'd, and unallay'd; Power uncontroll'd, Honour unenvied, and unrivalled: And let us imagine this unknown, unheard-of happy Man, after an uninterrupted Course of Prosperity, to have his Sun-set, as glorious as his Noon; yet (alas, for that mortifying Thought) his Sun must quickly set, the whole Sum of his Years, is, but as a

and losing one's own Soul.

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Hand-breadth, they hasten to their End, as it S E R M.
were a Tale that is told; and when once XIII.
his Breath goeth forth, and he returneth to Pf. cxlvi. 4.
his Earth, in that very Day his Thoughts
perish. All his Possessions, and Acquisi-
tions avail him not; all his fancied Happiness,
his towering Conceits, and grand Designs
come to nothing, and are buried with him
in the Dust. And lo! this is the short
End of all worldly Felicity; even, if a
Man could gain the whole World

BUT now, what is the Measure, what
the Bounds of that Loss; which this
wretched happy Man will sustain, in grasp-
ing at this Shadow of Happiness? He must
lose his own Soul: And when that is lost,
it is lost from an Eternity of transcendent
Happiness, into an Eternity of most insup-
portable Misery. An Eternity of Misery,
(O who can endure to think on't?) that
will be spent in the bitterest Reflections,
upon his own remediless Folly; in inces-
sant *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of*
Teeth; in bemoaning, and cursing, and
fruitlessly wishing an End to his own self-
tormenting Existence; and in all the most
horrible Ravings, of furious Desperation?

VOL. I.

A a

AND

AND what a deplorable Madneſs muſt it be, ſince eternal Miſery muſt come into the Account; for Men ſtill to purchaſe the tranſient, the momentary Satisfactionſ of this World, at ſuch an infinite Expence.

THE Diſproportion is every Way ſo unmeaſurably great, that it can *profit a Man nothing, if he ſhould gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul.*

I WILL only add, that by Parity of Reaſon, if a Man ſhould loſe the whole World, or all that he has in't, and ſuffer all the Miſery that this World knows, if he could but *ſave his own Soul*, he would be nothing damnified; for there is the ſame Diſproportion ſtill, and the Gain in that Caſe, muſt be infinitely greater, than the Loſs can be.

AND ſurely, theſe two Conſiderations, join'd together, are of ſuch infinite Importance; that, if duly weigh'd, and conſtantly kept in Mind, they muſt (by God's Grace) be ſufficient to preſerve us unchang'd, amidſt all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, and to carry us unhurt, through all the Temptations of this ſinful World; ſo as that, neither the Splendour

and losing one's own Soul.

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dour of any Thing that is great, or goodly SERM.
in our Sight; nor the Charms of any Thing XIII.
that is pleasing, nor the Smart of any Thing
that is afflicting, nor the Terror of any
Thing, that is most formidable to Flesh
and Blood: Shall be able to withdraw our
Eyes, or unfix our Hearts from Heaven,
the Centre of our Bliss, where (and where
only) true, and substantial Joys are to be
found, and to continue everlastingly.

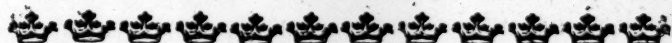
*Which God of his Mercy, make us Par-
takers of, &c.*





S E R M O N XIV.

Of the Eternity of Hell Torments.



MATTH. XXV. 46.

And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment; but the Righteous into Life eternal.



It is evidently an Instance of S E R M. XIV. the greatest Goodness, as well as a Point of the highest Wisdom in Almighty God: (The only *Lawgiver*, hat is able both to save, and to destroy to

S E R M.
XIV.

the uttermost) that he hath provided, for the Welfare of Mankind, by such Laws, and Rules of Life, as are admirably well suited to their Nature, and Condition; and do every Way approve themselves to their rational Choice; and that he has prest the Observance of those Laws, by the most powerful Motives, and such as must needs work very forcibly, both upon their Hopes and Fears. For, whilst the Yoke is so easy to bear, and yet the Sanction so strong to bind; Men cannot break loose from their Duty, unless at the same Time they renounce their Reason, and quit their dearest Interests; unless they act madly, and desperately, running *from* that Happiness to which they are invited, by the gracious Promises of the *Gospel*; and rushing headlong upon that Misery, of which they are forewarn'd by the most terrible Threatnings. The Sum of both which, is contain'd in the Words of my Text: And *these (viz. the Wicked) shall go away into everlasting Punishment: but the Righteous into Life eternal.* This will be the different Lot, the final Award of the Righteous, and the Wicked, at the great Day
of

of Retribution. And these Words *ever-* S E R M.
lasting, or *eternal*, do enhance both the XIV.
 Misery, and Happiness, and make each as
 compleat as possible. For what can add
 to the Weight of that *Misery*, which, be-
 sides, that 'tis otherwise the most exqui-
 sitely tormenting, is moreover loaded with
 endless Duration? What to the Height of
 that Happiness, which being the most ex-
 alted, and refined in its own Nature, is also
 crown'd with Perpetuity?

'Tis plain therefore, that God has ac-
 quitted himself, and done all that was fit
 for a wise, and a good Governor to do; to
 oblige, to persuade (not to say constrain)
 reasonable Creatures, to be happy, and *not*
 miserable. And if they do (any of them)
 miscarry, notwithstanding; there is no
 Help for them, it must be so; there is no
 Pity for them, they deserve it.

For when Life, and Death, is plainly
 set before them; and the Matter is left in
 their own Option, they have nobody to
 blame, nobody to complain of, but them-
 selves. The Terms are just, and equal,
 the Provision is kind, 'tis merciful: The *Re-*
velation is clear, 'tis unquestionable; and

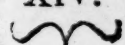
SER M. if, notwithstanding all these Invitations;

XIV. Warnings, and Terrors, they refuse to live, they will chuse to die, die they must; and that Death shall be eternal: *They shall go away, into everlasting Punishment.*

THIS is an unavoidable Consequence, that wicked Men have brought upon themselves; and I don't see where they can find any Shelter from the Wrath to come; unless the Threats of God mean a quite different Thing, from what they speak; unless there be a Reserve of Mercy for them, notwithstanding the express Declarations of Scripture to the contrary; or lastly, unless it should be utterly inconsistent with God's Justice, and Mercy to execute that Punishment; with which he has thought fit to threaten, and terrify Sinners.

BUT, that there is no Reason for such Thoughts, no Safety in such Hopes, is what I shall aim to prove in this Discourse. And if I can make it out, that the Condition of impenitent Sinners, is helpless, and hopeless after Death; this will sufficiently demonstrate the Necessity of a holy Life, and of the finishing the great Task of Repentance, before the Night of eternal Darkness

ness overtakes us; when Men are no longer to work, but to receive their Wages. My Business therefore in the Sequel, shall be to shew.

S E R M.
XIV.


I. *First*, THAT the *everlasting Punishment* threatned in my Text, must of Necessity be understood of positive, and endless Sufferings. And

II. *Secondly*, THAT to inflict such *Punishment*, is consistent with God's Justice, and Goodness.

I. AND *First*, I say, the *everlasting Punishment* threatned in the Text, must of Necessity be understood, of positive, and endless Sufferings; positive Sufferings, in Opposition, to a State of Annihilation, or Insensibility, in which some would fain take Sanctuary; and endless Sufferings, without Cessation, or Relaxation, which others are willing to hope for. But I am afraid, the Terrors of a guilty Conscience, awaken'd by the last Trump, and the rack-ing Pains of a Body, rais'd, and made most acutely sensible, on Purpose to be torment-ed; will convince them to their Cost at length,

SERM. length, that they *do*, and must *exist* to all
 XIV. Eternity, amidst the Agonies of a cruel,
 and inexorable Death; that will never put
 an End to them, but keep them *dying* for
 ever.

To rouse them therefore, out of a Security, that will prove fatal; I must assert, that the State of the Damn'd, as it is foretold, and describ'd in Scripture; cannot possibly be a State of mere Non-Existence, if we consult either the Force of Words, or the Reason of Things.

FOR when *everlasting Punishment*, is peremptorily denounc'd against the Wicked in the Text; 'tis in Vain to say, or think that Annihilation, is the permanent and everlasting Effect of God's Wrath, whereby the Sinner is for ever bereav'd of Life, and all its Comforts, and reduc'd into a wretched nothing; and that in this Privation, consists all his *Punishment*. Whereas in Truth, the very Word, which we translate *Punishment*, does imply Action, and Passion, and supposes a Subject to be punish'd; and if the *Punishment* be *everlasting*, so must the Duration of the Subject too.

It

IT is as vain, to make Annihilation S E R M.
the direct opposite to *Life eternal*; and XIV.
thence to infer, that this is all that the
Damn'd are like to suffer. For the Pro-
mise of *eternal Life*, does not only import
a Restoration, or Resurrection from Death;
but also a blessed Immortality, with all that
unspeakable Delight, and Satisfaction, and
that inconceivable Glory, which is the *In-*
heritance of the Saints in Light. And by
Parity of Reason, that *everlasting Punish-*
ment (which is also called the *second Death*
in the *Revelations*) does not barely signify, Rev. xxi.
a Privation of Existence; but also that 8.
Tribulation and Anguish, that Horror and
Desperation, which shall then seize upon
every Soul that doth Evil; when *Death and*
Hell are to give up their Dead; and they
are to be judg'd, and doom'd, every Man
according to his Works.

AND when it is said, *That the fear-* Rev. xxi.
ful, and unbelieving, and the abomina- 8.
ble, and Murderers, and Whoremongers,
and Sorcerers, and Idolaters; and all Liars
shall have their Part in the Lake, which
burneth with Fire, and Brimstone; which is
the second Death. What is their Part, or
Portion

S E R M. Portion like to be? Nothing but a kind of
 XIV. fiery Annihilation? No! but they shall be
 ~~~~~  
 Ver. 10. tormented with the Devils, that deceived  
 them (as we read in the foregoing Chap-  
 ter) *Day and Night, for ever and ever.*  
 But whosoever is not, has no Sensation,  
 and therefore cannot be tormented.

ADD to this, that frightful Description  
 of the State and Abode of the Damn'd, in  
 the 9<sup>th</sup> of St. Mark; where it is intimated,  
 that they are to be cast into Hell, with this  
 Aggravation thrice repeated, to make it  
 still more terrible; *Where the Worm dieth  
 not, and the Fire is not quenched.* But  
 what great Difference can this make, if  
 Annihilation be their only Punishment?  
 For assure the Sinner but once of this, and  
 make the Sting of the Worm ten thou-  
 sand Times more painful, than it is repre-  
 sented; and the Furnace ten thousand Times  
 hotter; and it will be an indifferent Thing  
 to him, that is to cease to be, and there-  
 fore cannot feel it.

And indeed at this Rate, the *Terrors of  
 the Lord*, would lose much of their Force,  
 and Hell and Damnation would be little  
 more than a Bugbear; serving rather to  
 3 harden

harden Men in their Sins, and to expose SER M.  
the Laws of God to Contempt; than to con- XIV.  
firm them in their Obedience, or urge them

to Repentance. For what would that  
Caution of our blessed Lord, so solemnly  
prefac'd in St. *Luke*, signify; if Annihila- Luke xii.  
tion, were the very utmost Effect of an om-<sup>5</sup>

nipotent Vengeance? *But I will forewarn  
you, whom you shall fear: Fear him, which  
after he hath killed, hath Power to cast into  
Hell Fire; yea, I say unto you, fear him.*

For why *fear him*, might the Blasphemer  
reply? I know the worst that I can suffer;  
Death will separate my Soul from my Bo-  
dy; and what can God do more? *He can  
destroy both Soul and Body in Hell*, you'll  
say: But what Addition will this be to my  
Misery, which is indeed an Exemption  
from it? For then I am no longer to exist,  
and therefore I can no longer suffer. So  
that let the obdurate Sinner, be but his  
own Interpreter; and all God's Threatnings  
shall be but so many big Words, that sig-  
nify just nothing; and even Hell itself,  
shall be his Comfort, and his only Refuge.

I CONCLUDE therefore, partly from the  
Importance of the Expressions that are u-  
fed



SERM. sed upon this Occasion; and partly from  
 XIV. the Manner of the Description, and partly  
 from the Reason, and End of all Threat-  
 nings; that the *everlasting Punishment*  
 threatned in the Text, must be understood,  
 not of Annihilation; but of positive Suffer-  
 ings, that are to last as long as their Sub-  
 ject shall continue to exist, and that is for  
 ever.

I PROCEED now to the other Branch of  
 my Assertion; namely, that it is also to be  
 understood of *endless* Sufferings, without  
 Cessation, or Relaxation.

Now the Presumptions against this, are  
 either; *first*, that the Threatning does not  
 mean so much, as it seems to speak, and  
 the Sound may pass for; or else, *secondly*,  
 that even admitting the Meaning to be  
 strict, and literal, it may nevertheless be  
 suspended, or remitted in the Execution;  
 both which, I shall shew to be equally  
 bold, and unreasonable.

AND *First*, for those that are, or pre-  
 tend to be persuaded; that the Threatning,  
 though it runs in a high Strain, does not  
 mean altogether so much, as the Sound  
 would make one imagine; they alledge to co-  
 lour

your their Presumption, that the Word *E-*<sup>S E R M.</sup>  
*ternal* does not necessarily include an infi-<sup>XIV.</sup>  
 nite Duration. Nay, they fetch Instances  
 out of Scripture to prove, that 'tis fre-  
 quently used for a determinate Space of  
 Time; that, though long first, was at last  
 to have its Period. Thus was *Circumcision*  
 call'd an *everlasting* Covenant; and we <sup>Gen. xvii.</sup>  
 find God promising, that the Sons of *Aa*-<sup>13.</sup>  
*ron* legally anointed, should *surely be*, an <sup>Exod. xl.</sup>  
*everlasting Priesthood*, throughout their Ge-<sup>15.</sup>  
 nerations; that is, say they, as long as the  
*Jewish* Polity was to stand, and no longer;  
 for since that Time, we know it has been  
 abolish'd. All this we must yield to be ex-  
 ceeding true; and let who will take the Ad-  
 vantage of the Concession. The Word  
*Everlasting*, we grant, is sometimes us'd  
 in a restrained Sense; but does this prove,  
 that it cannot, or does not signify at other  
 Times; such an absolute, unlimited, and  
 boundless Duration, as is properly, and e-  
 minently call'd Eternity? or does it prove,  
 that it must not however so signify, when  
 'tis attributed to Hell Torments?

THERE is so far from any Appearance  
 of Truth, as far as I can see, in such an in-  
 ference,

SERM. rence, that it rather helps to prove the  
 XIV. contrary. For as a limited Eternity does  
 in course expire, together with that Term  
 of Years, or succession of Ages, by which  
 it is bounded; so an unlimited Eternity, as  
 not falling under the common Measures of  
 Time, nor being circumscribed by any  
 bounds, runs an endless Circle upon its own  
 steady Centre, and knows no termination.  
 And therefore the *Aaronical Priesthood*,  
 tho' call'd indeed *Everlasting*, did then  
 cease, when it once arriv'd at that Period,  
 to which it was designed to extend, and  
 no farther.

BUT the everlasting Punishment of the  
 Wicked shall never cease, because, as the  
 Scripture declares, it commences not till  
 the End of all things; that is all tempo-  
 rary things, when Time it self shall be  
 swallowed up in that vast Eternity; which  
 no Arithmetick can compute, no Thought  
 conceive, no Duration exhaust.

AND that the Sufferings of the damned,  
 shall be of equal duration, with this un-  
 bounded Eternity; is beyond Contradiction  
 plain, from the Opposition in my Text.  
 For the word is used with Respect both

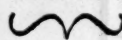
to the *Righteous* and *Wicked*. *These* (says our Saviour) *shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal*: And therefore, the Punishment of the one, is no more confined in point of duration, than the happiness of the other. If one be infinite, so must the other be allowed to be, or else there is no Rule to ascertain the Signification of Words; or rather, there are no Words full, and significant enough, to declare the Will of God, concerning the endless Duration of Mens future Happiness, or Misery.

I SEE no Shadow of a Reason therefore to the contrary, but that the Threatning may, and must be understood, without Limitation.

BUT perhaps it may be imagin'd, (which is another Presumption against this Truth) that there is a Reserve of Mercy, notwithstanding all the Solemnity, and Severity of this Threatning; that God may, likely, be better than his Word, as not being in Honour oblig'd to execute his Threats, though to make good his Promises he is; because the Performance of a Promise, is (as I may so say) a Matter of Right, devolv'd upon his Creatures,



SERM. tures; but the Execution of a Threat, is an

XIV.  Act of Sovereignty, that he wholly reserves in his own Power. And if he should suspend his threatned Vengeance, or abate of its Rigour in the Execution; who would be so silly as to say, that he were wrong'd? Who so bold, as to charge God, with Falshood? Especially, since he has given us a President of this Kind, in the City of *Nineveh*: For he had threatned absolutely, and peremptorily, that *within forty Days, they should be destroyed*; and yet he revoked the fatal Sentence, and spared them in his great Mercy.

Jonah. iii.  
4.

(THIS I think, is the Strength of this Plea; but I cannot discern, how it should fortify the impenitent Sinner, against the Terrors of eternal Damnation, or give him any Hopes of a Release from Torment.

'TIS true indeed, were the *Devil*, and all *his Angels* to be set free from their Chains; they, for *their* Parts, would have no Cause to complain. It would be no Injustice to them, but it would be highly injurious to God's own Honour, and to his essential Rectitude, and Holiness; which sets him at an infinite Distance from all remorseless

remorseless Sinners, whose Sins are ever SERM.  
hateful in his Eyes; and consequently, XIV.  
must of Necessity feel the everlasting Ef-  
fects of his just Displeasure.

I KNOW, some will adventure to say,  
(though I think without any Warrant, ei-  
ther from Scripture, or Reason) that God  
might, if he had so pleas'd, have pardon-  
ed the Sins of Mankind, without any A-  
tonement, or Satisfaction; but that he  
should do it without their Repentance, is  
utterly inconceivable: For where there is no  
Repentance, Guilt must needs remain, and  
where Guilt remains, there is also an Ob-  
ligation to Punishment; and where Pu-  
nishment is due to the Demerit of such  
Sins, as have never been repented of, God  
is both in Honour, and Justice concern'd  
to see to the Execution of it; lest he should  
appear at last, (which it were impious once  
to think of) to be reconcileable, not only  
to the Persons of Sinners, but even to their  
Sins too. Those therefore who die in Im-  
penitence, and are damn'd for it, must suf-  
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SERM.

XIV.

AND to say, that it would be no Wrong to the Sinner, is no better than a Quirk, when tis plain, that the Wrong, *i. e.* the Dishonour would redound to God himself; and reflect both upon his Justice, and Veracity. For after all, I am not able to conceive, how God should recede from the most exprefs and solemn, the most peremptory, and unconditional Declarations of his Will; such as the Denunciations of eternal Vengeance must be own'd to be.

'Tis very allowable to say, that it would be no Imputation for a Man, not to do that, which he has threatned to do. For Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils, may very commendably change a rash Purpose, taken up perhaps upon Prejudice, or Passion; nay, and if he should *give Place unto Wrath*, when he has the justest Provocation, 'tis no Defect, but a noble Virtue. But that the *righteous God, to whom Vengeance belongeth*; that the *great Judge of the whole Earth*, should in the last Result of Things, remit the Punishment, which he has threatned to Sinners, and which they have also deserv'd; must needs be a Derogation to his Truth, as well as a Diminu-

tion to his Sovereign Right, and just SERM.  
Power. XIV.

AND, as for that Instance of *Nineveh*, 'tis apparently short of the Matter in Question; for the Tenour of that Threatning was certainly conditional; it being a Rule that God had fix'd and establish'd to himself, as we read *Jer. xviii. 7, 8.* *At what Instant I shall speak concerning a Kingdom, or concerning a Nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will also repent of the Evil which I thought to do unto them, and therefore the King of Nineveh, look'd upon the Prophets Message, (as indeed it was) to be a Warning to Repentance. For who* Jonah. iii.  
*can tell (said he) if God will turn and re-<sup>9</sup>*  
*pent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not?* And the Event answered this Expectation; for it follows in the next Verse: *And God saw their Works, that they turned from their evil Way, and God repented him of the Evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.* But the Case is far otherwise in the final Doom of impenitent  
B b 3 Sinners;

SERM. Sinners; which is therefore irreverfible;  
 XIV. because there is then no Difpofition to Re-  
 pentance, nor Place for it; and therefore  
 no Poffibility of Remiffion. Upon the  
 whole therefore, I am perfuaded; that it  
 is clear, and undeniable, notwithstanding  
 the Evafions, that Sinners may fhelter un-  
 der; that they are irrevocably doom'd to  
 everlafting Torments.

IT remains now, according to the Or-  
 der, that I caft this Difcourfe into, at the  
 Beginning, that I fhould proceed to fhew;  
 that 'tis confiftent, both with the Juftice,  
 and Goodnefs of God, to inflict an eter-  
 nal Punifhment. But I am ferioufly per-  
 fuaded, that the *Revelation* is clear, and  
 exprefs for it; nay I do hope, that I have  
 proved it to be a Matter fo explicite, and  
 fo emphatically denounc'd in Scripture;  
 that I might fave myfelf this farther Trou-  
 ble, and truft what I have faid, with any  
 ingenuous, or equal Hearer: For that God  
 fhould exprefsly reveal, and folemnly threat-  
 en, what in Juftice, or Mercy, he could  
 not execute; is itfelf an Inconfiftency, greater  
 than any, that they who are dispos'd to  
 cavil, will be able to find again, in his  
 whole

whole Proceeding. And perhaps, if it be well consider'd, I have already foreclos'd all such Objections, as are drawn from God's Justice, and Goodness; because I have shewn in Effect, that it could not well consist with his essential Rectitude, and Holiness, and Faithfulness, to do otherwise, than he has threatned: And if the finite Duration of Hell Torments, were as plainly deliver'd in Scripture, as is the contrary; and it were equally the Sinners Interest to object against it; I am sure he might object much more plausibly, and reasonably, from that Quarter, than from the Ground he now stands upon.

I DON'T say this to lessen, or evade a Difficulty, that I don't care to engage; for all these Objections shall be fully considered hereafter, and should be now, if I had Time for it: But upon the Strength, of what I have already said, I shall venture to apply myself with some sort of Earnestness, and Assurance, to those with whom I have had to do more particularly; and all such as have any Regard for the *Gospel-Revelation*.



SERM.

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AND *First*, for those who place their false Hopes in a dark State of Annihilation; I would appeal to their own unprejudic'd Sense, and even to their natural Propensity; whether it be not a sad, and doleful Comfort, and whether it be not the last Thing of all others, that they would chuse, except an Eternity of Torments? They must not, they cannot deny, but that it is: For all living Creatures that are, are naturally fond of Being, they eagerly desire its Continuance; and their extreme Abhorrence, and Aversion, is that which tends to their Destruction. But a ghastly Prospect it must needs be for Man, that claims Kindred with the Angels, that prides himself in his Reason, and Reflection, in the Penetration of his Wit, the Brightness of his Imagination, and the Delicacy of his Sense; I say, it must be ghastly, and frightful, for such a busy, bustling Creature, to foresee, and consider; that he shall within a few Years be buried in deep Insensibility, and become an insignificant, and unactive nothing.

'Tis an Argument, that Sinners are hard driven by the Storms within their own Breasts,

Breasts, when they are forc'd to run for S E R M.  
Shelter into such a vast gaping Cave; XIV.  
which, according to their own Apprehen-  
sions, is ready to fall upon them, and co-  
ver them with Perdition.

BUT alas! this Privilege, though a  
wretched one it be, is what they must not  
trust to: They shall not be reduc'd to no-  
thing, would they never so fain: That  
Being, which they vainly hope to lay down  
in the Grave, will cling close about them;  
and become, when God shall raise the  
Dead, the Seat, and Subject of positive,  
and pungent Sufferings; and perhaps the  
self-conscious Sense, that they are the de-  
luded Wretches that once hop'd to be hid  
under Annihilation, will then help to en-  
crease, and enrage their Pains, and make  
the Flames of Hell burn fiercer.

AND if Annihilation be both an uncom-  
fortable, and fallacious Hope, how will  
the Sinners think to better themselves; if  
they seek for this lethargical Death, and  
cannot find it? Where will they next take  
Refuge? Will they pretend to pacify an  
awakened, and affrighted Conscience, with  
Fetches, and Amusements? Will they go  
about

SERM.

XIV.

Rev. xx.

10. and

xiv. 11.

about to quench the burning Lake, with Niceties, and Criticisms? And will they still hope to see an End of those Sufferings, with which they are threatned; notwithstanding they are declar'd to be endless, and perpetual, as expressly as any Words could do it? *They shall be tormented Day, and Night, for ever and ever; the Smoak of their Torment, ascendeth up, for ever and ever,* and they have no Rest Night, nor Day; besides many other Places, that have been before alleged, as full, and significant as these. What in the Name of God could prove it plainer than it is, except it be the fatal Experiment? And will they go on still betwixt Wishing, and Doubting, 'till they be forc'd to make the costly Experiment, which if it errs, is not to be corrected, 'till they be swallowed up in that bottomless Gulph; which they madly hope to wade thorough. What a desperate Risque would this be? And yet, if it should succeed according to their best Wishes, how weak; nay, how woeful were that Consolation?

FOR let me put the serious Question, would any Man be content to purchase the

the richest Pleasure, that refined *Epicurism* S E R M.  
XIV.  
knows, and spend some of his best Days, admit the twentieth part of a short Life, in the highest sensual Satisfaction; I say, would any Man be content with such a Bargain, if he were sure to pay dearly for it all the rest of his Days, in the crucifying, and unintermitting Pains of Cholic, Gout, and Stone? And is it not much a madder Choice, much a more unequal Bargain, for a Man to take his Fill of sinful Pleasures, which are but bitterly allay'd at best, and can last but a very few Years at longest; when he verily believes (and has too much Reason to be sure of this, and more) that he shall be, most incessantly torment-ed, for a thousand Years at least; and perhaps, for many Revolutions of Ages, with the most inexpressible Anguish of Soul, and the sharpest bodily Convulsions? And that, in a Place the most forlorn, and loathsome, where horrid Darknes shall be his Habitation; intermingled with dreadful Flashes of blue glaring Light, to fill his Eyes with numberless sad Spectacles, like himself: Where sulphureous Stenches shall be continually in his Nostrils, and  
hideous



SER M. hideous Howling shall rend his Ears; and  
 XIV. the Lamentations, and Execrations of his  
 Fellow-sufferers, shall heighten his Vexa-  
 tion, Impatience, and Amazement.

BUT if we add Eternity to the Heap of all these Miseries; O the Confusion, and Despair of such a Thought! to think, that after Millions of Millions of Ages, and all that vast Duration, which either Numbers can reckon, or Conception reach; the Punishment will be but still beginning, and never, never, like to End; being perpetually kept up, by the sad Remembrance of what is past; imbitter'd by the intolerable Smart of what is present; and enrag'd to the Height, by the rueful Expectation, of what is still a Coming, and will be always still to come. 'Tis a Torment, an Astonishment, even the Contemplation of eternal Torments! But O believe it! believe it! or there is no Way to escape it. And let us who profess the Belief of it, present it seriously to our own Thoughts, and meditate much, and often thereupon; that so we may be excited to serve God with Fear, and Reverence, and flee from his Wrath, into the Arms of his Mercy:  
 That

*of Hell Torments.*

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That the Terrors of Hell may help to per-  
suade us now, and not confound us for  
ever; and that we may go away, *not* into  
*everlasting Punishment*, but into *Life eter-  
nal*; not into that Place of Torment, where  
no Comfort abides, no Hope enters; but  
into those blissful Mansions, where sor-  
rowing, and crying, Pain, and Death shall  
be no more; but perfect Rest, and perfect  
Happiness, for ever and for ever. *Amen.*

S E R M.  
XIV.



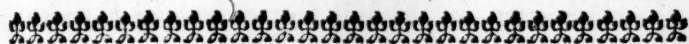
SERMON

2



# S E R M O N XV.

Of the Eternity of Hell Torments.



MATTH. XXV. 46.

*And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment.*



IN a former Discourse upon SERM.  
these Words, the better to XV.  
state and prove the Doctrine  
here deliver'd, I laid down  
these two Propositions; viz.

I. *First*, THAT the everlasting Punish-  
ment



S E R M. ment threatned in the Text, must of Ne-  
 XV. cessity be understood of positive, and end-  
 less Sufferings.

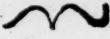
II. *Secondly*, THAT the Execution of such Punishment, is consistent both with God's Justice, and his Goodness.

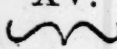
I. THE *First* of these I have already gone through with, proving, that the *everlasting Punishment* here threatned, must of Necessity be understood of *positive*, and *endless* Sufferings; *positive* Sufferings, in Opposition to a State of Annihilation, or Insensibility, in which some would fain take Sanctuary; and *endless* Sufferings, without Cessation or Relaxation, which others are willing to hope for.

THAT it cannot be understood of mere Annihilation, and nothing farther; is plain, both from the Manner in which it is describ'd in Scripture, and from the Importance of the Expressions there us'd; and also from the End and Design of Gods Threatnings.

FOR when we are told (as most solemnly we are) *that the Wicked shall be cast into Hell, where the Worm dyeth not, and*  
 the

*the Fire is not quenched, and where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth; and that they shall be tormented Day and Night, for ever and ever; that the Smoak of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and that they have no Rest Day, nor Night.* Can it be imagin'd, that all this Woe, and Terror is like to end in nothing? Shall the never-dying Worm feed upon *nothing*? Shall the unquenchable Fire have nothing for its Fuel? Shall they which are not, be incessantly tormented; and weep, and wail, and gnash their Teeth for very Anguish? *i. e.* Shall they be most exquisitely sensible, without all Manner of Sensation; and most deplorably miserable, when stript of their Existence? And shall they find no Rest, nor Remedy, nor cease from Trouble; when they cease to be? Or if not so, can it be supposed, that God should only put Sinners in Fear, where no Fear is, in Comparison; and threaten them only with a State of Non-existence, which is the easiest Hell, that Security itself can wish for? Can it be thought, that he should thus expose his own Laws to Contempt, in deterring Men from their Sins by a mere Bug-

SERM.  
XV.  


SERM. bear; which when thoroughly view'd, ap-  
 XV.  appears to be so far from the best they could  
 fear, that 'tis even the worst they might  
 expect? And why should his Power be so  
 very terrible, *who is able to destroy both Bo-  
 dy and Soul in Hell*; if the utmost that  
 is meant by this Destruction, be only to  
 deprive Men of their Sense, and Being;  
*i. e.* in Effect, to render them incapable  
 of all Pain and Suffering? No certainly, if  
 there be any Meaning at all in the Threats  
 of *everlasting Punishment*, which are de-  
 nounc'd against Sinners, with so much So-  
 lemnity; if God had any wise End, (as un-  
 doubtedly he had) in setting these Terrors  
 before Mens Eyes; they must be such,  
 as are most apt to alarm their Fears, and  
 affect their Sense; that is, they must be  
 positive, and pungent Sufferings.

AND, to make them still more dread-  
 ful, they must be endless too: For the  
 Word *Everlasting*, is not an empty Sound to  
 scare us; but it implies a vast unlimited  
 Duration, that shall never find an End. It  
 is indeed, sometimes used with Limitation,  
 and applied to temporary Things; but it  
 cannot be so understood in Relation to  
 Hell

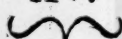
Hell Torments; because they commence S E R M.  
not, 'till the End of all Things; when XV.  
Time itself shall cease, and shall entirely  
be swallowed up in a boundless, incon-  
ceivable, and inexhaustible Eternity.

AND, that the Sufferings of the Damn'd,  
are to run parallel with this Eternity, is  
plain from the very Opposition here in the  
Text: For as the Lot of the *Wicked* is *e-*  
*verlasting Punishment*: So is that of the  
*Righteous, Life eternal*. And if you allow  
an unlimited Eternity in one Case, (which  
I think Nobody will be so hardy as to de-  
ny) you must allow it in the other too;  
or else there is no Rule to ascertain the Sig-  
nification of Words, or rather no Words  
full and significant enough, to declare the  
Will of God, concerning the endless Dura-  
tion of Man's future Happiness, or Mi-  
sery.

AND if such be the necessary Import of  
the Word *Everlasting*, (as here applied) I  
cannot see how the Wicked can hope for  
any Deliverance. 'Tis in Vain to think  
that God should be better than his Word,  
in shewing Mercy, where he has not pro-  
mised it; and remitting Punishment, where



S E R M. he has most peremptorily threatned it.

XV.  This were an Easiness, that could not well consist, either with his Honour, or his Truth. And I am afraid the impenitent Sinner, (as such) is not so much as capable of any Favour: For 'tis not possible, that God should be reconciled to Sin; and therefore not to the Impenitent, who dies in *his Sin*, and is justly damn'd for it. Short-sighted, partial Man, may change a rash Purpose, and see his Reason for it: But the essential Holiness of God, will not permit him to alter so righteous a Decree; even though his Veracity were nothing concerned in it. Nor will the Case of *Nineveh* afford any solid Comfort: For the Threat denounced against that City, was apparently conditional; and therefore the *Prophet* was sent to *preach to them*, that *they might repent, and be saved*; but in Hell there is neither Place, nor Disposition for Repentance; and therefore the Damnation of the cursed ones is irreverfible, and their Punishment everlasting.

THERE is not therefore the least glimmering of Hopes for such impenitent Wretches; unless it could be imagin'd,  
that

that God's Menaces run too high to be put in Execution; and that it would be unjust, and cruel in him, to inflict that Punishment, which he has so expressly threatened. But this is a Supposition that (were there any Ground for it) would reflect, I think, not very honourably upon God. To shew therefore, that this also is altogether groundless; I shall now make good my second Proposition, that remains hitherto untouched, *viz.*

S E R M.  
XV.  
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II. *Secondly*, THAT the Infliction of an *everlasting Punishment* upon Sinners, is consistent with the divine Justice, and Goodness.

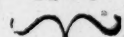
AND this, I hope, will in some good Measure appear, from these following Considerations.

First, THAT nothing can be inconsistent with God's Justice, and Goodness; which his Truth, his Wisdom, his Holiness, or any other of his Attributes, do manifestly require at his Hands. The Reason of which is, because there is a constant Uniformity in the divine Will, and a most exact Harmony among all God's Perfections;

S E R M. which do never interfere with each other,
 XV. but move consistently together. God is
 just, nay he is good to all, and he is more
 especially merciful to some; who are the
 select Objects of his Grace, and Favour.
 But he always exercises his Justice, and ex-
 tends his Goodness, and Mercy, according
 to the express Tenour of his Threats, and
 Promises; and as shall best suit with the
 Wisdom of his Providence, and conduce
 most to the Honour of his Holiness.

AND in the Case now before us, he has as
 expressly, and solemnly declar'd, as Words
 well can do it; that he will punish the Wick-
 ed with eternal Torments. And as it is not
 to be expected, that God should recede
 from the most positive, and peremptory
 Declarations of his Will; so it cannot be
 conceiv'd, that he should make any such
 Declaration, if it were either Injustice, or
 Cruelty, to act in Pursuance of it: For this
 would set God's Veracity at Variance with
 his Justice, and Goodness, which must not
 be allow'd. And therefore no Objection
 can lie against an Eternity of Torments,
 as being cruel or unjust; unless the Reason
 of that Objection be something more evi-
 dent,

dent, and undeniable; than all the Decla-
rations of Scripture to the contrary. And
such a Reason, I presume, will be pretty
hard to be met with.

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THUS again, if God has threatned Sinners with *everlasting Punishment*, (as has been sufficiently proved) the End of that Threatning, must be to lay an effectual Restraint upon Mens Lusts, and keep them within the Bounds of their Obedience; by the dreadful Prospect of endless Misery. And this one would think, were a very wise, and a good End, and every Way worthy of a just, and a merciful God. But if, upon a nearer Scrutiny, it should appear to be inconsistent with God's Justice, or Mercy, even to execute the Punishment he has threatned; and if Men were (as they that object it pretend at least to be) aware of this Inconsistency; then this wise Provision would indeed defeat itself, it would render God's Authority little less than contemptible; and considering the Hardness of Men's Hearts, it would, 'tis to be fear'd, make them but still more secure, and presumptuous in their Sins. So that God could not threaten Sinners with *eternal Death*

SERM. wisely, unless he could do it justly: But
 XV. having done it, he must be own'd to do it
 both justly, and wisely; otherwise his
 Truth, his Wisdom, and his Justice would
 not agree well among themselves.

ONCE more, since there is an infinite
 Contrariety between the Purity, and Holi-
 ness of God, and the Pollution of a Sin-
 ner: And since all Sin includes an Obli-
 gation to Punishment; and since no Sin-
 ner, that wilfully so continues, and wretch-
 edly so departs, can be purg'd from his
 Filthiness after Death: It follows, that all
 such, if they be liable to be punish'd at all,
 (as undoubtedly they are) must be also lia-
 ble to be punish'd eternally; because in
God's purer Eyes, they will always be look'd
 upon as most malicious, and impenitent
 Sinners; and as such, they are not so much
 as in any Capacity of Favour, but must for
 ever remain the accursed Objects of his just
 Displeasure. And how therefore, can that
 be alledg'd, as not well consisting with
 God's Justice, and Goodness, which not
 only his immutable Truth, and unnering
 Wisdom; but even his essential Holiness,
 and inflexible Justice do (as it were) claim
 at

at his Hands; as being necessary to maintain his own Honour, and do equal Right to all his Perfections? But

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Secondly, THE Nature of Man, if considered, and compared with that Condition, which he has brought himself into by Sin; will be a farther Vindication (if need be) of the divine Justice, and Goodness, in punishing Sinners, even to all Eternity.

FOR Man is naturally immortal, I mean, as to the more considerable Part of him, his Soul; which was so fram'd by God, as not to be subject to Corruption, or Dissolution; but to Pain, and Sorrow it is; and of all Sorrows none so keen, and piercing on this Side Hell, as that of a *wounded Spirit*, labouring under the heavy Load of unexpiated Guilt; and distracted with the amazing Fears of ensuing Vengeance. And the Man that dies with these sad Apprehensions about him, (as all that are impenitent do) must of Necessity be miserable, and that for ever and ever. For an immortal Spirit must subsist eternally; and a damned Spirit must suffer eternally; because, so long as it exists, it carries the cruel Cause of its own Misery always with-
in

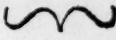
SERM. in itself: For the Worm of Conscience
 XV. gnaws inwardly; the Sense of Guilt wounds inwardly; and the Rage of Despair burns inwardly. And it must be a perpetual Source of unintermitting Torment to the Soul, that finds, and feels itself in all this wretched Plight; to be still either looking up with regretting, but despairing Eyes towards forfeited Happiness, that is now quite out of Reach; or else looking downwards with Horror, into an Abyss of Misery, which no Duration can exhaust, nor Hope can lessen; because it is, and must be as durable, as is its very Being. Since therefore, such is the Nature of Man, as created by God, and since such is his Condition, as impaired by Sin; it cannot be imputed to any want of Justice, or Goodness in God, that Sinners should suffer *everlasting Punishment*. This, I say, cannot be imputed to him; unless it were a piece of Injustice, to endow them with immortal Souls at first, or a piece of Justice to make them mortal again at last, (even contrary to the very Frame of their Nature) lest when they might have been for ever happy,

py, they should, through their own Fault, S E R M.
become eternally miserable. XV.

Thirdly, THEREFORE, if it be consider'd, after all, that this is no other than the necessary Effect, and unavoidable Consequence, of their own foolish and perverse Choice; God must be clear of all Injustice, and Cruelty, when he adjudgeth such obstinate Sinners to eternal Torments. If indeed Men had been kept in Ignorance of Heaven, and Hell; if they had wanted any Manner of Motive to be good, or any Discouragement to Wickedness; if they had been under a fatal Determination, without any Will, or Liberty of their own; or if they had been destitute of all Power of themselves, or Assistance from above, either to attain to that Happiness, which is held out to them only in Mockery, and at a Distance; or to avoid that Misery, upon the Precipice of which they are continually Walking; I say, had these been their hard Circumstances, the Rigour had been most extreme, and there had been not only Colour, but Reason for Complaint. But since Life, and Death is fairly set before them; since the Invitation on one Hand,
is

SERM. is no less than that of an infinite Reward;
 XV. and the Terror on the other no less, than
 ~~~~~ that of infinite Punishment; since they are  
 left to their own Freedom, either to chuse,  
 or to refuse; and lastly, since (besides their  
 own natural Desire of Happiness, and A-  
 version to Misery,) they have the Promise  
 of supernatural Grace to sanctify, and  
 cleanse them, and prepare them for Glo-  
 ry. I say, if under all these Advanta-  
 ges, they miscarry fatally at last, they must  
 charge God as foolishly, as they destroy  
 themselves; if they presume to say, or  
 think, that he is either unjust, or severe,  
 for suffering them to inherit the Portion,  
 that belongs unto them; even the Effects  
 of their own wilful Folly.

AND what has been said upon this Head  
 is sufficient, not only to vindicate God's  
 Justice, but to magnify it too. For weigh  
 an eternal Reward, against an eternal Pu-  
 nishment, and put the Merit of all the  
 Saints (if such an improper Word may be  
 us'd) into one Scale, and the Demerit of  
 the least of Sinners, that dies impenitent,  
 into the other; and the Excess of the Reward  
 will appear so vastly great upon the Com-  
 parison;

parison; that sure God must be own'd to S E R M.  
be not only just, but gracious, and boun- XV.  
tiful. 

NAY, upon a just Estimate, the Severity of God's Threatnings, is so far from being any Imputation upon his Goodness; that it is indeed the most illustrious Proof of it: For his manifest Intention herein, is not to conclude Men under Sin, or hurry them into Despair; but to frighten them out of it, and rouse them to Repentance. And the more loud, and terrible these Warnings are, the more Mercy there is in them. For it shews, how tender God is of his Creatures Good, how exceedingly desirous of their Happiness; that lest the more ingenuous Principle of Love, or even Hope, should prove ineffectual, he has spoke aloud to their Fear, to awaken them into a Sense of their Danger; that so by any Means they might be saved.

AND I do verily persuade myself from these general Considerations, that I have offer'd to you; (if you will be pleased to add them together, and ponder them seriously) that it cannot be inconsistent with God's Justice, or Goodness, to inflict eternal Punishment,

SERM. nishment, upon obstinate, and incorrigible  
XV. Sinners.

BUT lest it should be thought, that an Objection drawn up in Form, might be able to overthrow all that has been hitherto advanc'd; let us try the Strength of such as stand in our Way. And

*First*, IT is commonly said, that there is no Manner of Proportion betwixt Time, and Eternity, and consequently no Equality, or Justice in allotting an eternal Punishment to temporary Sins; some of them committed in a Moment of Time, all of them in a Compass of a short Life. But this Objection, plausible as it looks, proceeds wholly upon Mistake. For

*First*, IT is not; nay, it cannot be the true Measure of Justice; that there should be an exact Proportion betwixt the Crime committed, and the Punishment inflicted in point of Duration. For at this Rate, the Execution of Punishment would be scarce a practicable Thing; or at least not to be reconciled with the common Methods of Justice, and the allow'd Practice of Mankind. For it has always been a Practice, even in the best constituted Commonwealths,

monwealths, to punish enormous Offenders with Exile, or Imprisonment for Life, or even Death itself. The Effects of which, are as permanent, and perpetual, as it is in the Power of Man to make them. And Reason good; because though the Crime itself, to which such Punishment is allotted, might possibly be committed in a single Moment; yet the Consequents of it may notwithstanding last, and the Injury be irreparable. And sure, the same Reason that makes the Practice allowable, in the Course of humane Justice; will warrant it likewise in God's eternal Judgment.

BESIDES, if no Punishment were to continue longer, than just that Space of Time, in which the Fault was done; there would be no sufficient Difference made between the greatest of Sins, and the smallest Offence. For instance, 'tis possible for a Man to be guilty of Murder, Treason, and Blasphemy, all in one Instant of Time: And if according to this imaginary Rule of Proportion, the Punishment were to pass over in an Instant, there is not an idle Word, or evil Thought, if unrepented of, but would fall under as severe a Sentence; which

SERM.

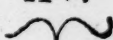
XV.



SERM. which would render even the Judgment  
 XV. of God, in a great Measure insignificant;  
 if the Sinner were able so to contrive it,  
 as to make the heinouslest Sin the cheapest  
 Purchase. But

*Secondly*, I am apt to think, that this wonderful Exactness of Proportion; is so far from being the adequate Measure of Justice, that it hardly falls under its Care, or Consideration. It concerns Justice indeed, to see that those Sins should be most severely punish'd, that have most deserv'd it; but it is rather Matter of Prudence to provide, that all Sins should be sufficiently discouraged, by the Punishment appointed for them; that so the Authority of the Law may be supported, and the wise Ends of Government secur'd. And without considering the Quality of Offences in themselves, if smaller Penalties will not answer this End, 'tis fit that greater should be inflicted; for that which is necessary to so good a Purpose, cannot be unjust. And therefore, an Eternity of Torments, however disproportionate in other Respects, cannot be said to be unjust; because 'tis no more, than what is necessary to keep Men  
 from

from Sinning, and even, where it is be-  
liev'd, not always so effectual to that End,  
as were to be wish'd.

SERM.  
XV.  


*Thirdly*, IF this Proportion between the Duration of the Sin, and Punishment, be still rigidly, though unreasonably insisted on: It may be truly alledg'd, that Sin is not so very transient a Thing, as the Sinner may be willing to imagine: For tho' each single sinful Act be even past and gone; yet the Stain and Guilt still remains, and the Habit, once contracted, is incessantly a growing; and, being at last harden'd into a State of final Impenitence, it becomes indelible, and incurable: And they that die in this wretched State, do carry all the Malignity of Sin along with them into Hell. *i. e.* an habitual Hatred to God, and a malicious Opposition to his holy Laws; and this, not confin'd to the Will alone, but breaking forth into Act, and expressing itself in the most horrid Blasphemies, and all the furious Outrages of restless Despair, and Malice: Untameable, even in Flames, and Chains; but without any the least Tokens of a true Remorse, or serious Repentance. Thus

SER. M. much may, I think, be gathered from the  
 XV. 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the *Revelations*, where it  
 is said, *That in the Kingdom of Darknes,*  
*they gnawed their Tongues for Pain, and*  
*blasphemed the God of Heaven, but yet re-*  
*pent not of their Deeds;* to give him the  
 Glory. And though there is no Need of  
 resolving the Justice of eternal Torments  
 into this; yet certainly it can never be un-  
 just, that they who spend a whole Eter-  
 nity, either in furiously, though impotently  
*willing*, or else maliciously, and desperate-  
 ly *acting* all the Wickedness, that is in their  
 Power; *should be tormented Day and Night,*  
*for ever and ever.* And that the Adjust-  
 ment between Sin, and Punishment, would  
 appear to be well proportion'd at last, the  
 Reasons before alledg'd, do evince in  
 Truth, that there is no Necessity of any  
 such strict Proportion, nor Room for it.  
 And this last offer'd, proves *ex abundanti*,  
 that the Proportion needlessly requir'd, is  
 not really exceeded; because the continued  
 Repetition of Sin is endless, both in Will,  
 and Deed; and the Continuance of the Pu-  
 nishment can be no more: And conse-  
 quently,

quently, the Objection rais'd upon this SERM.  
XV.  
Ground, has neither Sense, nor Force.

I know of but one Objection more, that will deserve a Mention, and that is,

*Secondly*, THAT the great End of all Punishment is to reclaim Offenders; but in Hell there is no Room for Amendment, and therefore the Torments of Hell are cruel, and unjust. But by the Way, this is no Objection against eternal Punishment; but rather against all Punishment in another World. However, all the little Difficulty that is in it, will be easily cleared up, by the Help of a very obvious, but necessary Distinction, *viz.* that the End of Punishments, in Relation to this Life, and that which is to come, is widely different. In this Life the immediate Intention of those temporal Judgments, which God actually inflicts, and even of those future Punishments, which he so terribly threatens, is to bring Sinners to Repentance, and to make them better. But if, notwithstanding these Methods of Discipline, they will live, and die irreclaimable; they do effectually defeat God's gracious Purpose, and render themselves incapable of the Fa-



SERMON. your he intended them. But nevertheless, this hinders not, but that God may, and must shew the severest Marks of his Displeasure, against such incorrigible Wretches; even for his own Honour's Sake, and for the Demonstration of his essential Righteousness, and his just Detestation of Sin. And, this is the ultimate End of all Punishments in the next Life; which is then at last put in Execution, when the State of the Sinner is remediless, and unalterable. And sure it can be no Unrighteousness in God, to make those Men the everlasting Monuments of his Vengeance in Hell, that once stood at open Defiance with him; and *because Judgment was not executed speedily against them*, regarded not his Threats, nor feared his Displeasure. No; even this last Act of inexorable Justice will clearly approve itself, to all the blessed Company of Saints, and Angels; who will see abundant Reason, not only to acquiesce in God's just Proceedings, but also to glorify his especial Mercy, that he should deliver them, from this Place of Torment, and instate them in endless, and inconceivable Happiness.

AND

AND thus I have endeavoured to establish, and vindicate the Truth of my second Proposition; *viz.* that the Execution of eternal Punishment upon Sinners, is consistent with God's Justice, and Goodness; against which, if there be any Thing else, that is material to be objected, besides what I have taken Notice of; I doubt not, but it may be easily resolv'd, upon the Principles already laid down.

AND now, upon the whole Matter, since the Case of impenitent Sinners is so very helpless, and deplorable; since nothing can skreen them from God's terrible Majesty, since Rocks, and Mountains cannot hide them, since Death itself shall flee from them, and Annihilation afford no Shelter, since their Being shall for ever be continued, and made the Seat, and Subject of everlasting Torments: Since the Mercy they have despis'd, shall at last give them up into the Hands of Justice, and the Judge they have provok'd, shall triumph over them without Mercy, in the Day of Vengeance; *Let us take Heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of us an evil Heart of Unbelief; let us take Heed of cherishing any*

D d 3

vain,

SERM. vain, or wicked Thought, that may take  
 XV. off the Edge of God's Threatnings, and  
 Abate of their real Terror; that may feed  
 us with flattering Hopes of finding Relief,  
 even in Hell, or seeing the Period of end-  
 less Misery; or delude us with false No-  
 tions of God's Justice, and Mercy; in De-  
 rogation to his Truth, his Wisdom, and  
 Holiness; or that may any Way minister  
 to Presumption, or Security. In short,  
 let us not affront God's Goodness, nor in-  
 sult his Justice, by being over-officious to  
 defend it. Let us not fence against Hell-  
 fire with Subtleties, nor think to avoid e-  
 verlasting Destruction, by winking hard a-  
 gainst it; but let us consider, that the  
 great God, holy and true, is our Judge,  
 and our Avenger; and considering, let us  
 be afraid, and let us stand in Awe, and sin  
 not; *Left he pluck us away, and there be  
 none to deliver us.*

AND let us reflect seriously upon that  
 vast Eternity, into which we are launch-  
 ing, when once this transitory Life is ended.

AN Eternity of Happiness, or an Eter-  
 nity of Misery! how surprizing, and tran-  
 sporting that! how amazing, and con-  
 founding

founding this! how boundless, and un-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
fathomable both! But let us lay these <sup>XV.</sup>  
Things to Heart, and consider our later  
End: And let us consider (if that be still to  
be consider'd) which is most desirable, *e-*  
*ternal Happiness*, or *eternal Mercy*. Or ra-  
ther, (to put the Case somewhat truer) let  
us consider, whether any Pain, or Plea-  
sure, that is merely temporal, can deserve  
so much as once to be nam'd, in Compa-  
rison of that which is eternal.

AND if not, let us be strong, and quit  
ourselves like Men. Let us not fear the  
mere Shadow of Power, (as all humane  
Power is) *but fear him, who after he hath*  
*killed, hath Power to cast into Hell; yea, I*  
*say unto you* (in our Saviour's own Words)  
*fear him*. And let us be wise also, and  
shew ourselves Men of Understanding.

LET us not fondly fall in Love with the  
Toys, and Bubbles of this Earth; which  
are either useless, or else perish in the ve-  
ry Using: But *let us set our Affections on*  
*Things above, even on God himself, who is*  
*the Lover of Souls*; and *who, after the*  
*Worms have destroyed this Body*, is able to  
restore it again to Honour, and Immorta-



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lity; yea, I say, let us love him with all our Heart, and Soul, and Mind. So shall we be void of Fear, *when that great, and terrible Day of the Lord shall come*; so shall we be found of him in Peace, and full of blessed Hope at the Appearing of *Jesus Christ*. So shall we escape the sad irrevocable Doom, and take Possession of eternal Joy, and Glory; when once we hear the ravishing Sound of those endearing Words, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World*. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, in and through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. To whom, with the Father, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is due, all Praise, Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now, and for evermore. *Amen.*

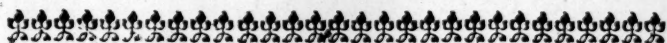


S E R M O N



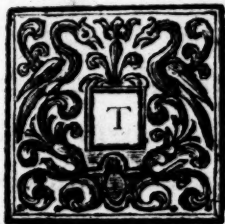
## SERMON XVI.

Of the Necessity, and Usefulness of  
good Education.



PROV. iv. 13.

*Take fast hold of Instruction, let her  
not go; keep her, for she is thy  
Life.*



THE wise Man sets himself SERMON  
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in this Chapter, with all  
the Authority, and Affection  
of a Parent, to recommend  
Wisdom (his own noble  
Choice) to the Study, and Pursuit  
of

SERM. of all the Sons of Men; as being the only  
 XVI. Foundation of solid Happiness, and the  
 principal Ingredient in it, the Stay, and  
 Ornament of humane Life, the proper  
 Glory of our reasonable Nature, and in all  
 Respects the most valuable, and richest  
 Purchase that can be made.

AND as he recommends Wisdom for one  
 of the best Attainments that Men are ca-  
 pable of, so he gives plain Directions at  
 the same Time, how it may be most ea-  
 sily, and certainly acquir'd. He knew it  
 indeed to be originally a Gift from God;  
 (for in his own Case it was most eminent-  
 ly, and distinguishably so) but he knew  
 too, that in all common Cases it was not  
 so entirely, and immediately a Gift, as to  
 supersede the Use of any subordinate Means.

AND therefore he in no wise overlooks  
 the most obvious, and natural Means of  
 attaining it, which is good Education, and  
 wholesome Instruction. This (together  
 with the Aspiration of divine Grace) he  
 takes to be the necessary Ground-work of  
 all laudable Improvements, both in Know-  
 ledge, and Virtue; and as such he lays the  
 chief Stress upon it in the Text, with  
 much

much Emphasis, and Earnestness of Words, SERM.  
*Take fast hold of Instruction, let her not go; XVI.*  
*keep her, for she is thy Life.*

FROM whence, not so much for the instructing of this Audience, that needs it not, as in Compliance with the present Occasion, that seems to invite me to it, I shall discourse something in brief Hints;

I. *First*, CONCERNING the Necessity, and Usefulness of good Education, and wholesome Instruction in general.

II. *Secondly*, CONCERNING the Advantage, and Excellency of that Method of Education, and Instruction, that is in Use in our publick Schools, and Universities in particular.

AND this done, I shall in the Close direct my Discourse to such as are more nearly concern'd in it, in some suitable Application.

I. *First*, CONCERNING the Necessity, and Usefulness of good Education, and wholesome Instruction in General:

AND



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AND doubtless, it is of absolute Necessity, and admirable Use in the training up the Child to a manly Stature, both in his Intellectuals, and Morals; that is in the furnishing his Mind, and forming his Manners; in which two Points consists the proper Improvement of a Being, endow'd with Reason, and free Will, and capable of discerning between Truth, and Falshood, Good and Evil; and of chusing, and embracing the one, and refusing, and rejecting the other.

AND *First*, I say, good Education, must be no less than necessary, in order to the furnishing the Minds of Children with that Knowledge, the little latent Seeds of which are indeed implanted in their Nature; but yet, as lying somewhat deep, they do require a good deal of Cultivation, and Art to nurse them up to any Measure of Encrease, or bring them to any competent Degree of Maturity.

IT is true, the humane Soul is a spiritual Substance, that is furnish'd, and adorn'd with excellent Faculties of its own, but then it needs much Time, and teaching, and training to draw forth these its  
natural

natural Powers, and enter them, even upon their proper Work; much more to make them but tolerably perfect in it. We have not a naked, and immediate View of Things, as Spirits of a superior Order have: We must be content to make such slow Advances, as the Incumbrance of Matter will permit. And the vital Union betwixt Soul and Body, renders the Operations of the one, so much dependent upon the organical Disposition of the other; that the Child cannot grow in Wisdom, but as it grows in Stature.

AND after the Consistency of the Brain, and the Confirmation of the bodily Organs is so far establish'd, as to be able to bear the ministerial Part allotted to them by the Laws of our Constitution; the Soul being as yet but a young Learner, is necessitated to fetch in its earliest, and chiefest Notices of Things, from the Report of the Senses: And the ruder Materials of Knowledge being thus laid in, and committed to the keeping of the Memory, serve for an Entertainment to the Imagination, or perhaps for an Exercise to the first Dawnings, and feebler Essays of Reason.

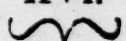
AND

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~v~

AND the better to carry on the Work thus begun; Words, as being the Images of Things, must be diligently learn'd, and carefully retain'd; for Grammar is the *Janitor* to all the liberal Arts, and Language leads the Way to Science. Not *that* Language only which is native, or deriv'd in Plenty enough from the Mother, and the Nurse! Recourse must be had likewise to dead Languages, that are hard, and crabbed, and in which the rich Treasure of antient Learning, and Wisdom is lock'd up.

AND when the Proficient has once got the Key to this Treasure, when he has learn'd the Use, and Regimen of Words, and, besides the Notice convey'd by his Senses, is able to consult good Authors for his farther Information; then a large Field opens before him; and his Work increases upon his Hands, and he finds himself more, and more engag'd in defining, and distinguishing, in joining, or dividing, in abstracting, or compounding the Idea's that he already has, and striking out others, as yet undiscover'd, by Dint of Reflection, and Introspection into his own Mind; then

is he covetous of enlarging his Views, and searching farther into the Nature of Things, and collecting, and concluding with more Certainty, and improving his natural Talent of reasoning all he can by Art, and Application.

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IN the mean Time, 'ere he can arrive to this, its evident, that he is under the Necessity of advancing by leisurely Steps, and following the Clue that is given him by some able Teacher, and of proceeding from one Thing to another, from that which is easy, to that which is harder: In sum it's too evident to need more Words, that good Education, and Instruction is absolutely necessary, towards the furnishing the Mind of Man, even with that Knowledge, that is natural to it.

AND then again, it is equally necessary to the right forming, and fashioning of his Manners. It must be own'd indeed, the Difference between Virtue, and Vice is founded upon the eternal, and unchangeable Reason of Things, and some Notions there are (if they must not be call'd innate yet) so congenial to the Soul of Man, that they cannot easily, or without the utmost

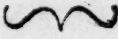


SERM. most Violence be stifled, or suppress'd.

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Such are those, that there is a God; and that he is to be worshipp'd; That Men ought to be dutiful to their Parents, grateful to their Benefactors, and the like. And yet it is not impossible but these very Notions, deep graven as they seem to be in all Mens Hearts, may be covered over in a great Measure by stupid Ignorance, or even blotted out by brutish Sensuality. And if we may give Credit to some Travellers, there are Nations in the World, that hardly appear to have any Sense of a Deity, or any Thing like the Face of Worship among them: And that go contrary to the Practice of the rest of Mankind in some Matters, that are most shocking to Nature, and create the greatest Abhorrence.

BUT not to insist on Instances, that (if true) are not only uncommon, but monstrous; it is but too visible, that there is in our deprav'd Nature, a strong Aversion to that which is good, and as great a Propensity to that which is evil. And this, we cannot but be sensible of it, makes us but too unapt to learn our Duty, and too willing

willing to neglect, or mistake it, because SERM.  
we do not love upon any Terms to pra- XVI.  
ctise it. 

AND it is indeed a deplorable Thing to consider, how prodigiously ignorant the uneducated Part of *Christians* are, in what concerns Religion, and Morality; which shews what miserable Creatures we should be, were we left to mere Nature, without the necessary Cultivation of good Instruction, and wholesome Discipline; which appears to be the more necessary, because the Mind never lies fallow: It is so fertile a Soil, that, if it be not sown betimes with the Seeds of Virtue, the Weeds of Vice will spring up of their own Accord, and, as the Nature of Weeds is, will over-run the whole Ground, and take such Rooting, that it will be hardly possible to get them out again. For as the Power of Habits is always great, so the Growth of evil Habits is much quicker, and their Strength greater than of those that are good.

IT is of the highest Importance therefore, to train up Children in the Ways of Virtue, that so early Custom may reconcile them to their Duty; and it is so much the

SERM. more indispensably necessary this, because  
 XVI. the Seducer is always at Hand to lead them  
 aside; and if the contrary Habit be first  
 contracted, it's a hundred to one if ever  
 they be set right at all; thus far of the  
 Necessity of good Education.

*Secondly*, I proceed in the next Place to  
 shew, that it is every whit as useful and  
 beneficial, as 'tis necessary. And the Use-  
 fulness, and Advantage of it will best be  
 seen in the good Fruits it produces, in the  
 happy Improvements that it makes again,  
 both in Men's Intellectuals, and Morals.

AND *First*, As to their Intellectuals, its  
 certain, that an ingenuous Education at  
 once exercises, embellishes, and strengthens  
 the Mind, and makes the Man to excel in  
 that, which is his proper Excellency above  
 the Beasts, in the Use of Reason, and Re-  
 flexion. It leads Men to the Knowledge of  
 their Maker, and themselves, and the Re-  
 lation that they bear to their Fellow-  
 Creatures, and the special Duties incum-  
 bent upon them in every of these Respects.  
 It gives them a larger Prospect of Things,  
 and better Rules to judge by, surer Marks  
 of Distinction betwixt right, and wrong;  
 Truth,

Truth, and Falshood; it qualifies them, S E R M.  
both for Contemplation, and Action, and XVI.  
fits them for the Discharge of all the mutual Offices of Life; and makes them every Way more serviceable to each other.

To this the Wisdom of the Law-maker, and the Art, and Ability of the good Magistrate is chiefly owing. To this we are indebted for the Lawyer's Skill to defend our Right, for the Physician's Care to preserve, and restore our Health, and for the ghostly Counsel of the Divine, that *Scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven*; who, Mat. xiii. 52. like the provident Householder, is *able to bring forth of his Treasure Things new and old*. These are some of the Benefits that naturally flow from a learned Education; and many more there are, which my design'd Brevity will not give me leave to reckon up. But without much Proficiency in Learning, if a Man be but taught the Rudiments of Grammar, and by that Means can read, and understand *English* pretty well, and has withal but a moderate Dexterity in Writing, and Arithmetick, he passes for a scholar-like Man among the illiterate Vulgar. And not without some



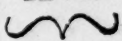
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kind of Title too. For even that Mediocrity of Knowledge, which he is Master of above his Neighbours, makes him really capable of giving them good Directions, and lending them Assistance in many of the common Affairs of Life. This Acknowledgment must be made therefore in the just Praise of a liberal Education; that, as it makes the Scholar, so it polishes the Gentleman, and in some Measure accomplishes the very Rustic.

AND then it must be allow'd too, that it has the same happy Effect in regulating, and refining the Manners of Men. For the End of good Education is, not Speculation, but Practice, it is not only to bring us acquainted with our Duty, but to enure us to it, and reconcile it with our Inclinations.

AND nothing certainly can contribute more to this, than to instil the Principles of Religion into the tender Minds of Children, whilst they are best capable of the Impression; and to season them with an early Sense of it, and to bend their Wills gently to a Compliance with it; or if there appear any Thing that's refractory, or un-

toward

toward in their Disposition, to correct it SERM.  
by a timely Discipline, before it grows to the XVI.  
Strength, and Stiffness of an evil Habit. 

AND it is observable in Experience; that those Youths, that have been well instructed in their Duty at first, and constantly train'd, and disciplin'd to it by the watchful Care of their Teachers, and Governors, do for the most look strait forward, and lead the Rest of their Lives answerably to such promising Beginnings. But to be sure they must answer the Expectation of their Parents, and Friends much better, than those whose Education has been neglected, or corrupted by Indulgence. They are undoubtedly better prepared, and disposed to acquit themselves, as best becomes them throughout the whole Course, and in all the Capacities of Life; as Subjects, Husbands, Parents, Masters, Friends, Neighbours, or what Relation soever we consider them in.

AND this is a Point, that *Lycurgus* the famous Modeller of the *Spartan* Commonwealth was so well persuaded of; that he thought the well-principling, and disciplining of Youth, to be the main Foundation

SERM. of good Order, and Government, and e-  
 XVI. quivalent to the making of good Laws; at  
 least he knew the best Laws would lose  
 their Force without it. And therefore he  
 made it his principal Care, and found his  
 Account in the Stability of the Govern-  
 ment, he had founded upon so true a Ba-  
 sis. Whereas *Numa* (as *Plutarch* ob-  
 serves in the Parallel he draws between the  
 two) though otherwise an able Lawgiver,  
 was deficient in this Particular, and there-  
 fore with all his Care left the State of  
*Rome* in a weakly Condition, for want of  
 those virtuous Impressions, that should have  
 been early made, and constantly inculca-  
 ted upon the Minds of the Youth, the bet-  
 ter to enforce the Laws, and dispose the  
 Subjects to a Habit of Obedience.

AND let thus much suffice, concerning  
 the Usefulness of good Education, and  
 wholesome Instruction, and Discipline, which  
 most People here are sufficiently sensible  
 of by their own Experience, and therefore  
 can easily enlarge, and supply such Obser-  
 vations as these from their own Thoughts.

II. *Secondly*, PERMIT me now (only to  
 shew

shew you that your Prefence, and Countenance is not altogether misbestow'd upon us to Day) to speak a few Words upon the second Head, *viz.* concerning the Advantage, and Excellency of that Method of instructing, and educating Youth, that is in Use at our publick Schools, and Universities.

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AND here (not to go out of the Tract I am in) I doubt not but the Method will approve itself to any competent, and impartial Judge, as being extremely well adapted, both for informing the Minds of Youth, and the fashioning, and regulating their Manners.

AND *First*, for the informing their Minds, nothing can be more easy, natural, orderly and regular, than the Method that generally obtains with all the Instructors of Youth, that pretend to any Thing of Skill, or Care.

WHEN the Children are first receiv'd into the Grammar School, they are minutely instructed in the several Parts of Speech, the Genders, and Declensions of Nouns, the Conjugations, and Formations of Verbs; and these Affections of Words being well



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riveted in their Memories, whilst not yet charg'd with the Weight of Things, they are led gradually from these simpler Rudiments, to Matters that are more compounded: They are next made acquainted with Grammatical Syntax, and Construction, the Rules of which they are taught to reduce to Practice, by turning *English* into *Latin*, and *vice versa*, and rendering an Account of some easy Author according to them. And after they have been exercised a while this Way, and made pretty familiar with a few Authors, that are most level to their Capacities, their Fancy, and Invention is put upon the Trial by some little Attempt in Versification, and their Judgment is also proved by *Latin* Themes upon some common Observation of Life, or receiv'd Maxim of Prudence, and Virtue; and then they are brought every Day more and more into the Acquaintance of the best classical Books, both in *Latin*, and *Greek*; they are made conversant in the Idioms, and Nicety of both Languages, and the Figures, and Rhetoric used by the most approv'd Writers in them both.

AND

AND after they have gone through this Process at School, they are in good Time remov'd to the University; and there they run through a fresh Course of Rhetoric, Logic, Ethics, Mathematics, Physic, Metaphysics, &c. besides the Time allotted to History, Chronology, and all the Parts of Philology in their private Studies. In the mean Time their Style is exercis'd in declaiming, and their Wit sharpen'd by frequent Disputations; by the first of which they learn to speak, not only elegantly, but appositely, and persuasively upon any popular Subject; and by the latter to maintain Truth strictly, against the subtlest Opposition, and to detect, and refute Error, though cover'd under the most specious Fallacy. And there is a constant Account taken of these their Studies, and Exercises exacted from them, that so they may make Proof of their Proficiency, and not defeat the Care, and Pains, and Cost bestow'd upon them, by any Remissness, or Negligence.

AND with this Preparation, and this Furniture, they are left at last to addict themselves with a more particular Application,

cation, to that Study, or Profession, to which their natural Genius most prompts them, or those by whom they ought to be govern'd, think it reasonable to determine them.

AND for my Part, I cannot see what there is wanting in this Method to make a compleat Scholar, unless it be the grand Defect of good natural Parts at the Bottom. And this Defect the Schoolmaster, if he be an honest Man, will always discover to the less discerning Parent, to prevent the farther Charge of fashioning, and finishing every unhewn wooden *Mercury*.

AND yet Parents I have known several, themselves bred in a scholastic Way, that have been eager (after *Tully's* great Example) to send their Sons to study at *Athens*, full sore against *Minerva's* Will. So sensible I suppose themselves of the mighty Benefit of a learned Education, that they are unwilling to think the Darlings of their Hopes incapable of it; they are resolv'd however to try the Experiment, though Nature forbids it, never so plainly, and so positively.

BUT

BUT to pass on to the other Article, if SERM. XVI.  
we examine it, we shall find, that the Method of Education, that generally obtains in our Schools and Universities, is equally well calculated for the forming, and regulating the Manners of Youth.

AND to this End, at first setting out, we may observe it is wisely provided by the Canons of our Church, that no Person Can. 77. shall presume to teach a School, but who is licens'd by the Bishop, or ordinary of the Place, and approv'd, not only in point of Learning, and Dexterity in Teaching, but also for the Gravity, and Integrity of his Manners, and his sound Knowledge in true Religion: And he is moreover en- Can. 79. join'd to instruct the Children well, in the *Church Catechism*, to bring them to Sermons, or divine Service upon all Festivals, and to be daily inculcating the great Principles of Piety, and Virtue upon them, as they are delivered in holy Writ.

By this Means principal Care is taken, that Children should be well, and solidly grounded in the Fundamentals of *Christ's* pure Religion, and early tinctured with  
a real



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a real Sense of it, and led by Example to the good liking, and constant Practice of it.

AND doubtless every Person that is found qualified to preside in a School, as the Canon requires, will, and must think himself particularly charg'd with the Inspection of the Children's Manners; and accordingly will have a watchful Eye upon their whole Behaviour, both in the School, and out of it. And to be sure he will think himself above all Things concern'd, to discountenance all Lying, and Swearing; to curb all Peevishness, and Contentiousness of Spirit; to correct all Perverseness, or Petulancy of Humour; and to restrain all Eagerness of Appetite, or Passion, with Severity, and Steadiness: In a Word, he will make it his Study, and Endeavour to keep his young Flock within the Bounds of Modesty, as well as Duty, to dispose them to mutual Love, and Peace, and to bend their Necks, whilst they are yet supple, to the Yoke of Subjection, and Obedience.

AND such an Initiation as this, he has Reason

Reason to hope, will have a good Influence upon the future Conduct of their Lives; especially since they are to be transplanted from hence to the University, where some discreet Person is sought out for a Tutor, who pursues the same Instructions, and carries on the same Discipline, though varied a little, and accommodated to the State of Youth now advancing toward Manhood; and consequently, as being no longer under the Terror of the Rod, to be govern'd by other Reins, and sway'd chiefly by the Motives of Honour, or Disgrace, the Hope of Preferment, or the Fear of a Disappointment.

AND accordingly, the Tutor whilst he is instructing them more fully in the Grounds of Religion, and lecturing them, will not fail to premonish them, that it is most indispensibly requir'd, that they should observe the stated Hours of Study, and Devotion, and conform to all the Rules of *Decorum*, Modesty and Sobriety; that in the mean Time the Eye of the Censors, and Governors is constantly upon them, that if they behave themselves well, and regularly they will be encourag'd, and reap both

SERM. both the Praise, and Profit of it in the  
 XVI. End; but if they break Order, and fly out  
 into Extravagancies, they must expect to  
 be severely censured; and if they continue  
 irreclaimable, to be dismiss'd Home to their  
 sorrowful Parents, with a Character of Ig-  
 nominy.

AND what Means can be us'd after all,  
 what Motives can be thought of, that  
 could work more powerfully upon man-  
 ly, and ingenuous Tempers, either to al-  
 lure them to be virtuous, or to restrain  
 them from being vitious? And yet, as long  
 as Youth is Youth, and Nature is Nature,  
 some Escapes, it is confess'd, some Exces-  
 ses there will be, notwithstanding all the  
 Vigilance, and Prudence of the Tutor.

BUT then it is observable, that those  
 young Men are of all others most prone to  
 these Irregularities, who, if their Parent's  
 Fondness would have suffered them to see,  
 were never fit to be sent to an University,  
 or whom perhaps domestic Indulgence has  
 rendred utterly impatient of foreign Re-  
 straint. And 'tis but too natural for those  
 that can't tell how to spend their Time  
 profitably at their Books, thro' constant  
 Idleness,

Idleness, sometimes to fall into a Fit of S E R M.  
Looseness, and Debauchery; and 'tis as XVI.  
natural for those, that are corrupted them-  
selves, to entice others. But abating for  
now and then an accidental Instance of  
this Sort, which 'tis impossible altogether  
to prevent, I will be bold to say, that  
there is not a public *Academy* in *Europe*,  
where in Proportion to the Number of the  
Students, there is so much good Regulation,  
such a Face of good Manners, and so lit-  
tle Disorder committed, as in each of our  
two Universities. And I believe those Gen-  
tlemen that have observ'd any thing a-  
broad, will readily give their Suffrage to  
the Truth of what I say.

AND what has been said may be suf-  
ficient in some Measure, to shew the Ad-  
vantage, and Excellency of that Method  
of Education, which obtains in our Schools,  
and Universities. Nor am I aware of any  
material Objection, that lies against any  
Thing, that has been hitherto advanc'd.

I KNOW indeed it has been antiently a  
Question, whether a public Education at  
School, or a private one at Home be to  
be preferr'd. *Quintilian* you may be sure  
gives



SERM. gives it for the former. And doubtless,  
 XVI. generally speaking, it is much the best for  
 Children to learn in Company, where they  
 may observe one another, and learn from  
 one another, and improve one another;  
 where Praise, and Dispraise will more sen-  
 sibly affect them, and will whet their In-  
 dustry. And for their Manners I must  
 take Leave to say, that they commonly  
 thrive better under the Austerity of a Ma-  
 ster, than under the most tender-hearted  
 Mother that ever was. For that fond In-  
 dulgence with which Children are too of-  
 ten us'd at Home makes them apt to be  
 perverse, and obstinate, and the Share of  
 Government that they find they have, ren-  
 ders them proud, and imperious; the Want  
 of Converse with their Equals creates a  
 Narrowness of Spirit in them, and the  
 Neighbourhood of the Nursery infuses an  
 Effeminacy of Temper, that 'tis hard for  
 them to shake off all their Lives after; all  
 which Maladies might be prevented, or  
 would much better be prevented by the  
 Discipline of a School.

BUT I know some notional Refiners  
 particularly the ingenious Author that has  
 publish'd

publish'd some Thoughts concerning E-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
ducation) find fault with the Method of <sup>XVI.</sup>  
teaching that is used in our Schools.

They would not have Children's Memo-  
ries stuff'd, and loaded with huge Parcels  
out of Authors ; they would not have their  
Invention put upon the Rack to make Ver-  
ses and Themes so young, as the *Israelites*  
were forced to do Bricks without Straw ;  
they would not have so much Time spent  
in beating out *Greek* and *Latin* ; they are  
for a more compendious and comprehen-  
sive Method, and would have Children at  
the same Time that they are learning of  
Words, let into the Knowledge of Plants,  
Minerals, Animals, Geography, Astrono-  
my, Anatomy, and what not ? But with  
Submission to such nice Judges, I should  
think, that to exercise the Memory of  
Children is the best Way to strengthen it ;  
and that is the proper Time to exercise it,  
when their Stock of Knowledge is but  
slender, and they have little else to deal  
with but Words, the Learning of which  
*memoriter* will prepare them the better to  
receive and retain Things of Moment af-  
terwards. As for Themes and Verses,

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though it is not expected from their tender Years, that they should write in Prose with the Weight of Philosophers, or in Poetry with the rich Vein of *Ovid*; yet 'tis fit that by this Practice their Reason and Thought should be gradually excited, and their Fancy and Invention quickned; and 'tis the best Way the Master has to try the Genius of the Scholar, and see what Nature promises for him, and is most likely to perform. *Lastly*, As for the tedious Time that 'tis grudg'd should be spent in hammering out *Greek* and *Latin*; there is certainly this Compensation, that what is so leisurely learned, is the more thoroughly and critically understood: And I am apt to think this dull, plodding Way, as much as it may be despised, has been one great Means of preserving Learning in the World. For to grant that Languages might be learned by Rote; yet I doubt, had that been the common Method of Teaching, we had long since lost our Acquaintance with the learned Languages, and left that rich Repository, bequeathed to us by the Antients, a Prey to Worms and Moths.

AND

AND whereas these thrifty Men would SERM.  
not have so much Time consumed about XVI.  
mere Words, but would have Children at  
once let into the Knowledge of Things,  
and entred into the Arts and Sciences: So  
they are, say we, by gradual Steps, as they  
are capable. But we cannot hold it good,  
to fill young, and weak Heads too fast,  
and too full of Things they are not able  
to bear. And for those precious forward  
Wits that, when 'tis put to them, appear  
to grow so very quick, and blossom so  
very timely, it is not always found, that  
they come to Maturity sooner than others,  
if ever they arrive at it at all. Nay, 'tis  
observed of those Youths that are such early  
and nimble Smatterers in Things much  
above their Years, that they are often o-  
vertaken, and left far behind too by such,  
as run the slow, and long Course of a well-  
ordered School, and therefore remain in  
good Breath throughout the whole Circle  
of the Arts and Sciences.

I HAVE but one Objection more to sa-  
tisfy, and that is the \* Author of the Ac-

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\* Lord Molesworth.



SERM. count of *Denmark*, printed 1694. who be-

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stows a very curious Preface (very little related to his Book) upon this Subject of Declamation. And truly, he is an Objector of a peculiar Complexion; for he makes that the grand Fault in our Manner of Education, which sober Men think a very happy Provision; and that is, that the Government of our Youth is chiefly in the Hands of *Priests*. And these *Priests* (it seems, Protestants or Papists 'tis all one) have an Interest separate, and that Interest they make their Idol; and to this Idol, and the Pleasure of Princes, they are ready to sacrifice the poor Children, and to poyson their innocent Souls with most pestilent, slavish Doctrines; at best there is nothing to be got at our Schools and Universities, but a little old-fashion'd, useless Learning, and a great deal of Opiniatrey, Bigotry and Pedantry. So that it had been well, for the Good of all your Children (as this grave Author wishes) that they had been under the Tuition of *Philosophers*, rather than *Priests*. For they, we are told, made it their honest Care to teach their Disciples the generous Principles

ples of Liberty, and the Love of the Publick, &c. Now in answer to this last Suggestion (for all the rest, every one that reads or hears despises.) In answer to this, I would remind this Author of one Thing, that he seems not to be aware of; and that is, these *Philosophers* whom he so much magnifies, and most of the Institutors of Youth, among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, were Slaves, bought and sold for Money, and the highest Price that ever was known to be given for one of them in *Pliny's* Time, was three thousand Sesterces. But *Plutarch* taxes it as too frequent a Fault in Parents, that they thought the very vilest of their Slaves good enough to be Governours to their Children. Now I say, it is more than a little strange that these Slaves should not (at least through Inadvertency) instil some of their degenerate, servile Principles into their Scholars, especially since they had a Religion too to serve the Purpose with. For the Author tells us, they sometimes made Use of pious Frauds, as the Fable of the *Elysian* Field, and a Prospect of future Happiness. But then, as he adds, it was to deceive them

SERM. them into Greatness, and so there was no  
 XVI. great Harm in it. And if the Religion of  
 modern *Priests* were like to that of the  
 antient *Philosophers*, as easy to be detected  
 of Forgery, and exploded for it; that  
 might be pretty harmless too. But 'tis  
 the true Religion, that is of all others the  
 most wretchedly enslaving; and therefore  
 this generous Restorer of Liberty, labours  
 hard to knock off those uneasy Shackles,  
 and clinches all his shrewd Remarks upon  
 the wrong Byass that is given to Youth in  
 their Education, with a *tantum Religio po-*  
*tuit, &c.* But amidst all the impertinent  
 Pretence to Reading, and loose Kind of  
 Reasoning, and intemperate Railing that  
 this well educated Author abounds with,  
 we are obliged to him for one valuable  
 Discovery; for he makes that very plain,  
 which has been long suspected, that there  
 is a secret Alliance, and a perfect good  
 Understanding between the *Republican*  
 and the *Atheist*.

BUT I have troubled you more than e-  
 nough with these Matters: And 'tis high  
 Time to put an End to this tedious Ha-  
 rangue with a very brief Application to  
 you

you, Gentlemen, that are our Encouragers S E R M.  
and Benefactors. XVI.

BUT I shall very quickly relieve your Patience in this Point, because I am fully persuaded that I cannot go about to exhort you to any Thing that is virtuous and good, but what you are already well disposed to, and prepared for.

SHOULD I pretend to inform you what Respect is due to the prudent, and painful Instructors of Youth, how the Antients paid Honours to their Ashes, and placed their Statues among those Persons whom they held in highest Veneration, this is what you know already, and have often heard with Pleasure and Approbation. Should I undertake to tell you how much that \* worthy Person deserves, who now for many Years has bestowed his Labours so usefully amongst you, you are Witnesses and Judges of this too; and I am loth to make his Praise his Penance. And indeed he will leave so many living Monuments of learned Pains and Care in this Neighbourhood, and the whole Countrey; that

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\* Dr. Tooke.



440 *Of the Necessity, and Usefulness, &c.*

SERM. there can be no Need of doing Justice  
XVI. to his Reputation, or preserving his Memory any other Way.

SHOULD I excite you to be liberal and bountiful to us, ye have been so already, and we have no Reason to doubt, but so ye will continue.

SHOULD I exhort you to maintain mutual Friendship and strict Unity together, ye have always given that honourable Testimony of an excellent Education: Ye have been trained, ye have grown up together in the Love of the Church, your Countrey, and one another; no part of the Kingdom more famous for it.

*Now to God the Father, &c.*

The End of the First Volume.



